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Bitter Sweet

WESTERN MAINE
PERSPECTIVES

JUNE, NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY TWO
VOLUME FIVE, NUMBER SIX



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by Robert Johnson

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Bitter Sweet Views

LIFE CHANGES: MY GRANDMOTHER

We've been cleaning out the farm this past month. It was Grandmother's house and her spirit fills it up. It was Grampa's, too, of course, but he's been gone longer and so it's easier to see her there.

Grammie was not the sweet little old lady pictured in Hallmark commercials. She never let us play in her attic; we never had tea parties on her lawn—in fact, she often thought our games were “crazy” or “silly.” Babies and little people made her nervous, I think, but she raised three fine sons in her matter-of-fact way; and before them she helped with a big family of younger brothers and sisters.

Grampa was more fun—telling jokes, playing games, pushing the

swing, popping corn. Grampa was a roly-poly person, always laughing, always with a stick of gum in his pocket. Grampa sent the birthday cards. Grampa showed us how to chop wood, row a boat, fish, and drive a car. He was lovable.

It wasn't as easy to love Grammie. She was stern. She made us put on our shoes and socks and sweaters. But there were always molasses or filled cookies in a jar in her cupboard. If she wasn't too busy, she might sew some doll clothes. And if you caught her off guard she just might smile—briefly. So we learned to love her anyway.

We learned to expect certain things from Grammie and she never let us down. We expected to find those cookies in her cookie jar. We learned that she would gladly take us berry-picking. We learned to count on her delicious pies; and the marvellous produce from her fertile garden on Maple Ridge. She never went swimming, that I can remember, but she would often watch us.

There were always clean beds enough for everybody in the big farm house. The sheets might be scratchy and patched, because she never threw

anything away until she had wrung out its last possible use. Worn-out sheets became smaller sheets, then pillowcases, rags, and finally mop-heads. Clothing became smaller clothing, then patchwork. She was an incredible example of Yankee thrift and logic, and she never stopped working. By her example she taught us so many things. Grammie didn't read stories to her grandchildren from the kitchen rocking chair—she taught us to shell peas there. And that was the way she became lovable to us. She was dependable. You could count on the fact that her family always came first; just as you could count on last year's Christmas cards becoming this year's Christmas package tags—a habit my sister and I have both acquired. We hope we may have acquired some of her other habits, too.

Her name was Hazel and she married young—about seventeen. She lived in her big two-story white colonial farmhouse in Harrison for most of 67 years, I believe. As in a May Sarton poem, her furniture stood a lifetime's span in that place. It was good furniture, bought at hotel and farm auctions over the years of her marriage.

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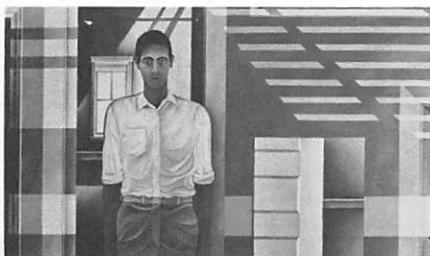
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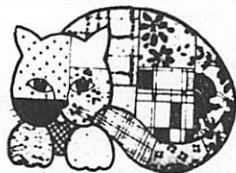
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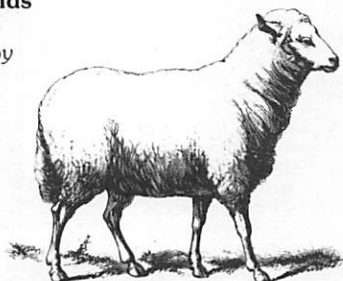
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Cowboys In Fryeburg

CLARENCE MULFORD

At least three generations of Americans have been enthralled by the daring feats of Hopalong Cassidy—the Old West's version of the Medieval black knight—who was a champion of the oppressed and a guardian of peace against the frequent machinations of villainous outlaws. Children flocked to their local movie theatre to see the latest Hopalong Cassidy adventure starring William Boyd, either in the morning or at the Saturday afternoon matinee. Teenagers and adults filled the same theatre for one of two evening shows.

But not just Americans were entertained by Hopalong Cassidy; millions of people around the world were thrilled by the debonair cowboy. He dressed in black, wore a big iron on each hip, had a lightning draw and a deadly aim, and in general presented a dashing figure galloping on a white horse across a desiccated landscape in pursuit of outlaws. The romantic idealism that goodness always triumphs over evil was never shattered.

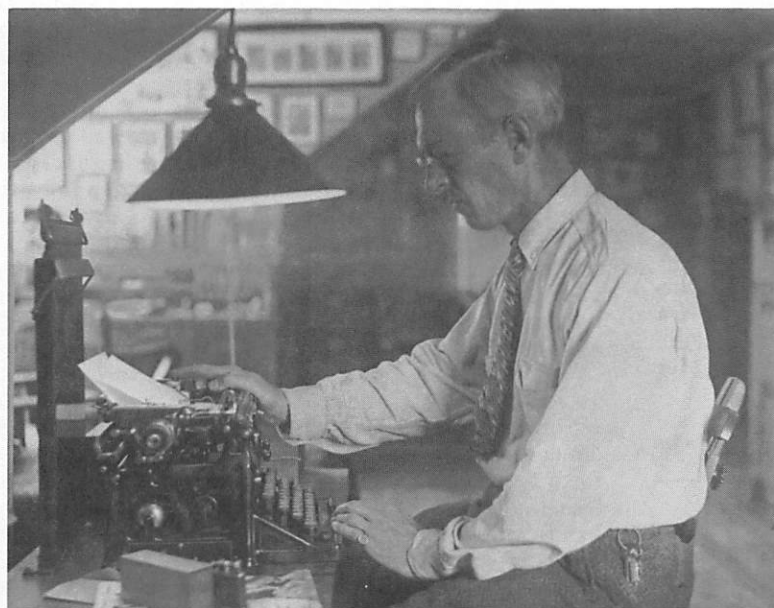
Few Hopalong Cassidy fans, even the thousands from Maine, ever knew that their beloved idol was the creation of a man who lived and wrote his exciting, painstakingly accurate novels and short stories in Fryeburg, Maine.

Clarence Edward Mulford was the only child of Grace Kline and Clarence Cohansey Mulford, who were living in Streator, Illinois, at the time of his birth. About his birth, Mulford once wrote:

"I have been told that I was born at 8 o'clock in the evening of the third of February, 1883; although I was present at the time, this small detail escaped me. I was a beautiful little child and wore my curls until they became provocation to battle among less beautiful children with whom I associated.

Both of Mulford's parents were of German ancestry. Mrs. Mulford's father had been involved in a rebellion and fled to the United States to avoid possible execution.

Mulford's father operated a steam heater factory, and in 1886 he developed and manufactured the Mulford Heater. The family moved frequently to such industrial cities as Chicago, St. Louis, and Kansas City; thus young Clarence was forced to change schools rather frequently, "which



The Man Who Created Hopalong Cassidy

by Jack C. Barnes

tured with the exciting tales of the Old West and Western heroes, that he would later become one of America's greatest writers of Western fiction.

Young Mulford's grandparents lived just outside of Streator, and he frequently visited them on weekends. His grandfather had a barn full of books and old volumes of the *Harper's Weekly*, which contained many stories about the West. Clarence sat in the barn for hours at a time devouring every cowboy story he could find. Later he stated in retrospect, "I think reading influenced me more than anything else when I came to write years later."

During his childhood years, he manifested no particular affinity for sports and preferred to spend much of his time alone. Being an only child and changing schools frequently were contributing factors to his tendency to be an introvert. More than likely, his creative and artistic mind was already basically at work, rendering him oblivious to those around him. He was remembered by his classmates in much the same way he is remembered by Fryeburg residents today—somewhat shy, friendly most of the time, but reserved.

The Mulfords eventually moved to Utica, New York, and it was there at Utica Academy that the young Mulford completed his formal education. Later, after he had attained fame as a writer, he regretted not having learned more German, for he received hundreds of letters from German admirers after his works were translated into that language.

Years later when Mulford was permanently settled in Fryeburg, he wrote of his early childhood memories:

"One of my earlier thrilling experiences was riding in the

complicated school matters," as Mulford recalled years later in an interview.

In 1889 the Mulfords returned to Streator where Clarence attended the junior high school. According to one of his classmates, he was not much of a student.

"He would sit there with one of those five-cent paperback Wild West books—Buffalo Bill, Kit Carson—inside his school book and read it throughout the study periods. He kept his desk so crowded with them there was scarcely room for anything else."

It seemed doubtful then, as he sat enraptured

cab of a locomotive over the long trestle and bridge across the Missouri River on an unattended childhood visit to Kansas City.

"Another of my earlier impressions was the smell of the Kansas City stockyards. After 45 years, I can still smell them."

Eventually the Mulfords settled in Brooklyn. The elder Mulford had aspirations for his son to attend college and study engineering. The alternative to college was work; Mulford chose the latter because, to him, college meant "four years in a well-established rut."

Mulford obtained a ten dollar-per-week job reporting and writing for a monthly magazine called the *Municipal Journal and Engineer*. He later recalled this experience:

"I read and clipped newspapers and other exchanges from all parts of the

United States and could have become quite an authority on gossip and in a large way."

After the magazine was sold, Mulford worked briefly for an engineering firm, but soon switched to employment with Civil Service, where he remained until he retired to Maine.

Although as a child Mulford had manifested little interest in athletics, he did become very actively involved in a body-building program. He was so successful that he won special recognition for his splendid development by *Tip-top Magazine*. This accolade meant much to a young man who measured only 5'6" and weighed a mere 130 pounds. It was also while living in Brooklyn that he became an avid Brooklyn Dodger fan.

A Literary Career Begins

September 14, 1904, was an auspicious date in the life of Clarence Mulford, for it was then that he more or less launched a literary career that would gain him international fame and complete financial independence. He entered a short story contest sponsored by *Metropolitan* magazine, and received \$100 as one of the six recipients of the second prize award. He wrote about a mystery of an escaped convict. Of course, the setting was in the Old West.

He immediately followed up on this success in 1901 with a series of short stories published in *Outing Magazine*. With very few modifications he was able to combine the series of short stories into a novel—*The Bar 20*. After the successful publication of his first novel, Mulford would devote most of his time until retiring from writing to enhancing his literary career.

As one might expect, there were inaccuracies in his first novel, and readers who knew the West were quick to call these fallacies to his attention. However, Mulford, being a stickler for authenticity and a meticulous researcher, took even greater pains to assure the accuracy of all his future works. For example, he spent two years researching and six months writing a book on the Santa Fe Trail. He soon found himself on intimate terms with pioneers, trappers, buffalo-skinners, cowboys, ranchers, and gamblers. Over the years Mulford acquired an impressive collection of Western Americana, including volumes of such primary resources as diaries of pioneers and old maps. He

kept a card index system that contained over 10,000 handwritten notes. He explained his dedication to research by saying, "Western novels have got to be on the level. If they aren't, people write in."

As novel after novel flowed from his typewriter, his ever-increasing reading public assumed that Mulford was a lifelong resident of the West. The fact remains, however, that it was not until 1926 that he finally embarked upon his one and only pilgrimage to the world that had permeated his life from a small child, and about which he had so successfully written. Mulford was the paragon of proof that it is entirely possible for a writer to write realistically and accurately about a world he has never seen except through the eyes of others.

In a letter to the *Brooklyn Eagle*, July 5, 1926, Mulford stated, "One reason why I stayed away from the West for so long was I wanted to keep my illusions about it. Finally, for publicity purposes, I went."

As he had feared, he quickly became disenchanted with the world that had and would continue to dominate most of his life. He soon wearied of the small towns, the aridity and desolation, and the intense heat (it was 140° in the shade when he visited Death Valley). He encountered little in his extensive travels from Kansas to New Mexico and California and as far north as Montana and North Dakota that he did not anticipate. He quickly discovered that he knew more about the West than the people who lived there. In the same letter to the *Brooklyn Eagle*, he wrote:

"I had all the spots figured out; I knew every creek by the looks of it and whether or not it had a muddy or sandy bottom, and could tell the natives the name of it."

Mulford's Consuming Hobbies

Clarence Mulford was known as a man who had many hobbies, and one of these was piloting a boat. Sometime around 1912 he became a licensed pilot of motor vessels under fifteen tons for all the coastal and inland waters of the United States. He owned his own cabin cruiser which he named *Hopalong Cassidy III*. Among his most memorable experiences were the four rather extensive cruises he made into Canadian waters. On his first voyage, four friends accompanied him on a 1063-mile cruise. They embarked

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in New York Harbor, cruised up the Hudson River into Lake Champlain, down the St. Lawrence to the Great Lakes and Ottawa, and on to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the Saguenay before returning to New York. At one time he contemplated crossing the Atlantic in the *Hopalong Cassidy III*, but as he later wrote:

"I had to have someone to shift watches with me; and I could find no one whose judgement was so poor that he cared to go. Seeing that the boat was a 30-footer, and that we would have to carry and tow 120 cubic feet of gasoline, eat cold food, and do without smoking, I believe the rejections of the offer of a berth were justified." (Like his contemporary Booth Tarkington who summered and wrote in Kennebunkport, Mulford was a chain smoker.)

His Marriage To Eva

If one were to single out the event that influenced his life the most, it would have to be his marriage in 1920 to Eva Wilkinson, who had a daughter Emily by a previous marriage that ended in a divorce. Mulford met and fell in love with Eva in 1907. However, since her father was a wealthy man, he did not feel at that time that he was financially solvent enough to marry her. Eva was a constant companion and inspiration to Mulford for as long as she lived.

Mulford's mother lived with him from the time of his father's death in 1910 until her death in 1943. She also exercised a strong influence over her son and frequently served as an agent for him in dealing with publishers and movie producers.

In view of the fact that Mulford showed very little interest in women (except, of course, the woman he married) it seems rather interesting that the two people who exerted the most influence upon him were women. His lack of interest in women in general can perhaps be contributed to his immersion into the world about which he wrote.

His characters needed to be as free as the wind that swept across the prairies. Women would have been as confining to most of his characters as barbed wire fences were to the cattle drives and the tumbleweed. A paramount example that gives credence to this point of view is the way Mulford freed his greatest character creation—Hopalong Cassidy—to ride the ranges

*"Hopalong's
Colts peeped
over the ears
of his horse.*

*and he
backed into a
corner near
the bar"*

*Illustration
from a
Mulford book
drawn by
Frank E.
Schoonover*



and enforce the unwritten laws of the Old West by having his wife and child die of "the fever" early in their marriage.

Like so many other talented writers of the past two centuries, Mulford was attracted to Maine. (Maine has contained more Pulitzer Prize winners than any other state.) Two of his hobbies—fishing and experimenting with high-powered rifles and revolvers were key factors in his decision to leave Brooklyn and settle in Fryeburg in 1926. In another letter to the *Brooklyn Eagle*, December 8, 1926, Mulford wrote:

"The Sullivan Law will not give me the opportunity that I must have to experiment with revolvers to make my books realistic. If a man in the Flatbush were to fire off an old Colt 45 to see the effects on his ears that he might describe the experience for the story, he might have the neighbors and police to reckon with."

Life In Fryeburg

Mulford purchased the large three-story home on Main Street, Fryeburg (now owned by Leo Grondin) and moved in with his wife, mother, and stepdaughter. Since Mulford was a quiet, unobtrusive man who placed a high value on the use of his time and needed privacy in which to work, it seems somewhat of an enigma that he chose to live in the busiest section of Fryeburg. Many folks around that town considered Mulford an eccentric because the lights in his large study on the third floor were often still on at three and four o'clock in the morning. But a writer must have uninterrupted privacy, and Mulford preferred working during the hours when everyone else in Fryeburg was sleeping; consequently he developed the habit of sleeping until noon in order to gain enough rest.

The light in Mulford's study was like a lighthouse that attracted lost

wayfarers to his door. He would answer the door, be patient and helpful—but hidden under one arm was a revolver pointed right at the late nocturnal intruders.

Mulford plotted and wrote novel after novel as well as stories for a number of magazines in a spacious room on the third floor. It was in this room that he kept his many volumes of valuable books, diaries, and journals of the Old West. His extraordinarily elaborate index card files were at his fingertips. The room abounded in Western memorabilia, which included what was reputed to be a lock of Wild Bill Hickock's hair taken from his head after he was shot and killed in a poker game in Deadwood, South Dakota in 1876. Mulford so admired Hickock that he modeled Hopalong Cassidy in part after him.

Mulford's basement served as a game room. Here he kept a poker table and a billiard table. Above the door leading to the room, he inscribed the name of the room—"The Fo'Castle"—by inserting beer caps into the wood, a reminder of the four memorable cruises he took in the *Hopalong Cassidy III*. He tacked up such famous

poker hands as the "Deadman's Hand" (aces and eights—two pair) which Wild Bill was holding when he was shot by Jack McCall. Mulford also included his own four card draw to a straight flush.

Although a loner by nature, Mulford enjoyed having a local group in to play penny-ante poker. It was a varied group that met almost every week to play in the "Fo-castle." There was Hal Gray, a retired trapper, hunter, and fisherman who liked to garden; Bill Jordan, the local postmaster; Hugh Hastings, attorney-at-law; Harry Chase, a retired pharmacist; George Roberts, contractor and the oldest surviving member of the "Fo-castle" boys. Harold Jay, retired manager of the Casco Bank in Fryeburg; and David Hastings, son of Hugh Hastings, were occasional players. David Hastings (who practices law in Fryeburg) is the only other surviving member of the old "Fo-castle" group. He remembers Mulford and the poker sessions vividly.

"He (Mulford) played only one kind of poker: penny-ante straight draw. The dealer anteed a penny; nobody else anteed anything, and there was a

nickel limit. It was quite a dedicated group who played. Money wasn't an object but they sure cared who won. It was a big night if you lost fifty cents."

Mulford was very devoted to his game; he tried to get one going almost every week.

"We would play until about a quarter to eleven. He kept a refrigerator in his basement and about fifteen minutes before the game ended, he would serve everyone a beer, and then he always had cigars that he would pass out. At eleven we would all play 'rounders' (once around) and that would be the end of it."

Mulford liked guns and constantly experimented with arms—target-practicing and making his own ammunition. It was an integral part of his endless, conscientious research to make every event and incident in his novels absolutely plausible. It was also important to him to compare the feats of his literary characters with his own dexterity. "Never include anything in a novel that can't be proved" was his motto. He persevered for days on end using a dummy and a cast-iron

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. . . Page 2 BitterSweet Views

None of it matched, but it was sturdy and dependable, like her.

So, we've been moving that furniture out. The farm, which has been in the Chute family since about 1912, has been sold. Nice people bought it—people who intend to use it as a working farm and raise sheep. I'm glad about that. But packing everything up has been revelatory. Except that her plants was gone and, of course, the cookie jar was empty, the house was just the way it always had been when she was alive, and her spirit was everywhere, even when the rooms were bare.

We threw some things away; sold a lot; but we kept some too. Someday a few pieces of her furniture will be in my house and passed down to my children and grandchildren, I hope. Life changes, but some things still get passed on along with the furniture—like values and memories. Whenever we look at it, we'll think of Grammie and remember her dependability, her thrift, her own kind of love.

One of the things that makes *BitterSweet* so rewarding as a publication is the same kind of "passing

along" of lessons and memories from the folks who lived in Maine before us. They learned to live with rural life in ways which will help those of us who continue to live here; and future generations to come. We react to material that it sent us with much the same thrift as Grammie had—we never discard anything, no matter how small or strangely written, until we have put it to some use.

WRITING CONTEST

Once again our writing contest has come to a deadline—and again without overwhelming numbers of entries. We don't know whether it's the students or the teachers who lack confidence or interest in their work, but we continue to encourage people of all ages to *write, write, write*.

We will be spending the summer reading the entries sent us by dedicated teachers and we should be ready to notify the winners by August. You can watch for these budding authors and poets in our back-to-school September issue.

The following poem was sent to us by a junior high student prior to the writing contest. We think it is a good

example of what young people are capable of writing.

IMAGES

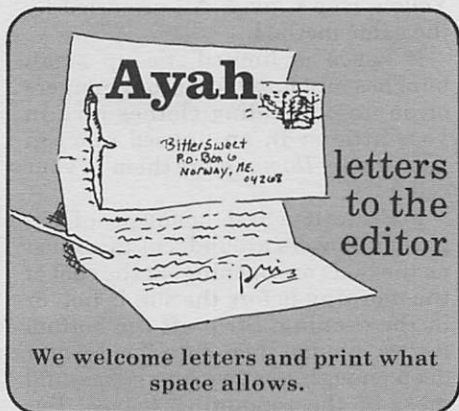
A crisp brown leaf flutters
delicately to the cool,
welcoming ground.
A single, miniature raindrop falls
swiftly to the shimmering,
clear looking-glass below.
Above, a solitary bird glides
ever-so-gracefully through
the quiet wind.
Above all of the world's confusion
lies nature;
silent and beautiful.

Susan Jackson
Harrison

UPCOMING ITEMS

In future issues, watch for these upcoming features: Kate Douglas Wiggin, the Shakers, climbing Old Speck, farm animals, the Wadsworth family in Hiram and Portland, building greenhouses, Norlands at Livermore, the Bethel-Rumford Electric Railway debate, various artists, and more!

Nancy Marcotte



MERGING

I continue to find your publication exciting particularly because you have merged the interests of the natives and the newcomers so creatively.

Nancy Merrow
Portland

THIRTY YEARS

Mrs. Chew and I have just returned to Blackwood after a wonderful 6 weeks on the Island of Maui, Hawaii. It sure is a paradise—next to Norway, Maine.

I surely enjoyed Ron Whitney's story "C.A. Stephens, Storyteller to America" (December, 1981.) Also many other stories printed. Your publication is an asset to the Norway area. Keep up the good work . . .

Mrs. Chew and I will be returning to our summer home at the lake for the 30th summer May 25th.

Norman Chew
Blackwood, New Jersey

TAKING OFFENSE

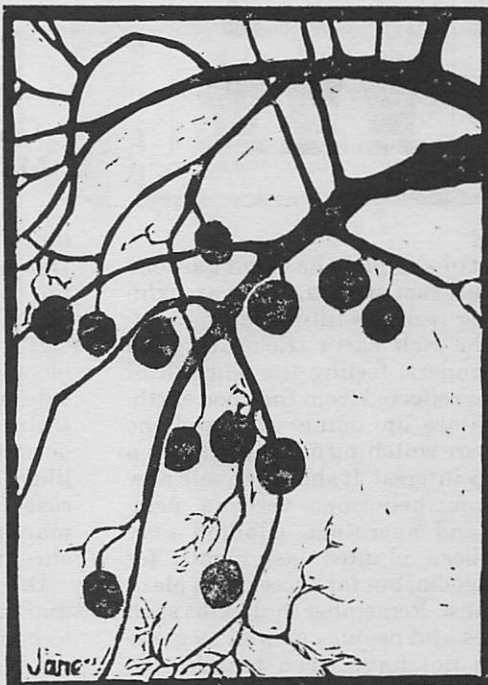
I was given a copy of *BitterSweet* and recognized the picture of Western Ave., South Paris. (March, 1982.) There were some interesting articles, but after reading the story entitled "Clothespins" I could never subscribe to the magazine. The language used must be an offense to any Christian person. To ridicule the name of Him who made Easter possible is more than I can understand.

George Colby
South Paris

Ed. Note: We are sorry if any of our readers were offended. It is certainly not our intention to be un-Christian.

Page d . . .

Print by Jane Gibson



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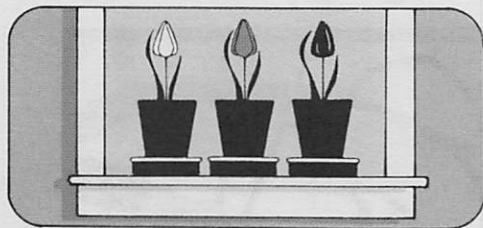
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Potpourri

Gardening Tips by Margaret Harriman

JUNE

Most of us should have our gardens in, or at least started. What an exhilarating feeling—tilling the soil, letting the rich earth trickle through your fingers, feeling the warmth of the sun reflected from the good earth.

Peas are up, doing well, and the crows are watching my garden with a hungry interest. It should be safe now to set out heliotrope, verbena, petunias, and ageratum. Gladioli may have been planted last month for early bloom, but for succession, plant more now. Remember that bulbs such as lilies and peonies as well as glads should not have fresh manure too near them.

Check your roses for visitors: the usual pests and those dreadful brown-tail (gypsy) moths. They totally covered my rose bushes last year, devouring the rosebuds before going on to

the less tasty leaves. I used Raid, House & Garden on my bushes, spraying the larger shrubs and trees with Sevin.

If you wish to have large peony blooms, take time to de-bud the smaller side buds, leaving only the larger central one. Later this month, if time permits, cut off the seed pods of your lilacs. Feed your rose bushes, using a rose fertilizer, bone meal, or liquid manure, and prune your flowering shrubs.

Dried flower lovers—watch the fields and roadsides for interesting flowers to bring in and dry. Field pussy toes are up. You may find a patch as you look for wild strawberries. Bring them home and hang them upside down in a warm, dry place with plenty of air ventilation; they'll dry in a week or so. Rabbit's Foot Clover should be ready to pick, too, now through July; also

Yellow Hop Clover. All are dried by the same method.

If space is limited, tie up small bunches and hang from coat hangers or on an old folding clothes rack in your attic or in an unused room in your home. *Do not* store them in your cellar.

For the loveliest bouquets of cut garden flowers around, cut them just as the buds are opening, in the cool of the morning before the sun is hot, or in the evening. Strip off the bottom leaves, plunge them into tepid water deep enough to cover the stems and most of the remaining leaves. Put them in a dark, cool place until ready for arranging.

There's still time to dig dandelions and possibly find some fiddle-heads. They're both excellent frozen. And for the best strawberry jam in the whole world, try to find enough wild strawberries to make freezer jam. It's fantastic!

While you're putting away your gifts from Mother Nature, remember to use up last year's supply of goodies that you worked so hard to put there—that is, if you're fortunate enough to have anything left.



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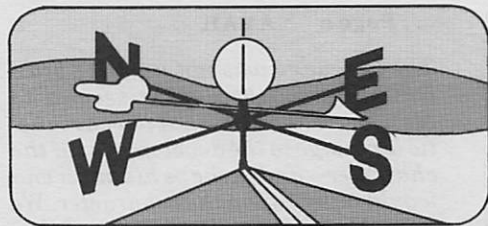
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THE MAINE EVENT

BY BRITT WOLFE





Thinking Of Country Things

by John Meader

THE TARNISHED PLANT BUG

A couple of gardening questions have come my way that, as it turned out, had the same answer: the tarnished plant bug. It strikes me that the varmint has not had enough publicity, considering the damage he does.

The tarnished plant bug is a flying insect about one-quarter of an inch in body length that gets its name from the tarnished, metallic appearance of its back, particularly the backs of the wings. In certain angles of light the back can appear quite shiny—copperish or silvery. That's before the creature quickly flies away, which it will do at any disturbance. Sometimes one also spots a sort of silvery triangle at the insect's aft portion.

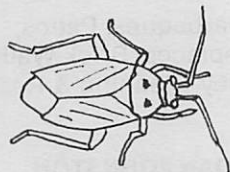
The damage? Tarnished plant bugs are said to attack over fifty plant species. The principal form of attack is to puncture leaves, blossoms, small fruit and portions of fruit, and to suck out sap. But this is not the end of it, for apparently the bug in some instances also injects a toxin, and the effect of the toxin is to kill or deform plant tissue. Additionally, the puncture and the damaged plant material stand as potential entry points, or sites for plant diseases.

Peas, shasta daisies, and strawberries are three rather unrelated plants, yet the tarnished plant bug can rather severely harm all three. One spring I was perplexed to see the unfolding leaf tips on the pea vines turn black. I pulled apart the damaged material and out flew a tarnished plant bug. Potato leaves will often show the same blackened, deformed tips and the cause is the same. I've walked down potato rows and seen the tarnished plant bugs go whizzing away like metal confetti in a windstorm.

With shasta daisies, the tarnished plant bug crawls into the bud just when the steeple of the petal has barely begun to part, and there in hiding it bites and sucks. The resulting blossom will be a poor, gummed-over thing with perhaps three intact petals

and the rest of it a nubbin.

A nubbin is what one gets with strawberries when tarnished plant bugs have had their way. The insect attacks the blossom and possibly also the fruit. The fruit thereafter never develops, or develops on one side only—the other side being caved-in in appearance, yellowish and quite seedy; of no value.



The tarnished plant bug.

Problems with a similar appearance can sometimes occur in strawberries due to poor pollination caused by a light frost; but most often the tarnished plant bug is the criminal. Early strawberries may escape damage, but ever-bearing strawberries often suffer extreme damage as the plant bug population rapidly increases with summer weather. Some years the yield of good berries off ever-bearers will be painfully close to a mean zero.

The tarnished plant bug also attacks raspberries, spoiling fruit. It feeds on apple blossoms, bean plants. You'll see blackened leaf tips, celery, cauliflower, cukes, beets, chard, turnips—you name it. I haven't seen it on tomatoes. Perhaps it doesn't like the competition from other insect pests.

Remedies? Well, some books recommend cleaning plant litter and weeds from the garden and its periphery. However, I don't put much hope in that. If there's alfalfa growing anywhere around, you'll probably see tarnished plant bugs, since alfalfa is an alternate host. Furthermore, last fall I was caulking some cracks between boards on the side of the house, and what should come crawling out, wriggling protesting antennae, but several tarnished plant bugs. Ma

and Pa, doubtless, just settled in for a long winter's nap.

I don't worry about tarnished plant bugs in peas or beans, because the pests seem to favor other plants more; they're merely waiting for the potatoes to come up. As for potatoes, I figure whatever I use to deter (one doesn't often eradicate, one merely slows down) potato beetles will also punish the tarnished plant bug.

Flowers present a different problem. There are a number of potent sprays that could be used, but unfortunately they would kill the bees that work the flowers daily. So I use rotenone. It is not thought dangerous in bees and it will drive bugs off, and perhaps even kill some. It remains effective for no more than twenty-four hours—a drawback. I accordingly dust almost daily. Since I use rotenone on several vegetables as well (cabbage, lettuce, cauliflower, broccoli), I make a pass through the flowers on the way.

Problems further increase when it comes to ever-bearing strawberries, for obviously one doesn't want to spray or dust something one hopes to harvest and eat, ideally every day or two. For the small scale grower, I think the solution lies in plastic screening. This spring I'll plant some ever-bearers in a narrow bed with a frame of boards around it over which screening can be stretched. It's a kind of minor nuisance. Tarnished plant bugs definitely are not.

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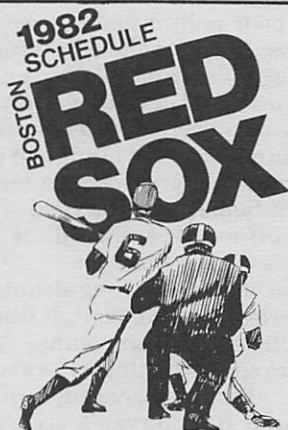
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... Page a AYAH

The language was not used for prurient value but because it seemed to Ms. Gorrie and to us that it was realistic language to the development of the character—and perhaps his bitter end would reflect upon that character. We hope Mr. Colby will give us another chance.

OLD AGE

A couple of winters ago you published my poem, "Winter Sonnet." This poem is more serious—but about a subject we all face.

*She sits imprisoned in her wheelchair
Pleading to be returned to bed.
Her frightened little-girl eyes
Beg for stroking and for loving.
Her child-like brain is very tired.
If only she could go to sleep.*

*She sits bewildered in her wheelchair,
Clutching a lap robe to her knees.
Limbs once so mobile, now shrunk
and stiffened.*

*Face once so glowing, now gaunt
and furrowed.*

*Her wraithlike body is so weary.
How I wish that she would sleep.*

*Will I, too, someday sit in languor
Waiting, weeping, wavering,
weakening?*

*Rather, let death come gloriously,
in a chariot
Than soporiferously in a wheelchair.*

Anita Twitchell Cook
South Paris



A POET'S ILLUSION

The mountain floats silently by
On soft pillows of white clouds,
And above the billowing shrouds
Pines silhouette a cerulean sky.

Far under the veils that conceal
The world above from the world below,
Crystal waters incessantly flow
Through faery lands that seem unreal.

But all that lay in seclusion
Is revealed in vivid details
As winds snatch away the veils—
Shattering a poet's illusion.

Jack C. Barnes
Brookfield Farm
Hiram

by Ann Munch

GREATER PORTLAND LANDMARKS PRESERVING THE HISTORIC PAST

Part II

From Portland's heyday as a shipping port at the turn of the nineteenth century until the middle of this century, the city's stately elegance suffered a steady decline. Then, in 1961, the destruction of the fine old Union railway station spurred those who wished to preserve, restore, and adapt the fine old buildings into action. What they did was to form Greater Portland Landmarks, Inc. which, since 1964, has worked to save the face of the city.

"Landmarks works for historic district ordinances because such ordinances would create, by surveying the architecture of districts and knowing what exists there now, the possibility of maintaining the best possible current flavor of neighborhoods. They are not aimed at antiquing everything, but rather to deal with what is there and to enhance the best features of areas. Not allow overcrowding, not allow thoughtless treatment of exteriors. Create some standards of quality for the maintenance of pri-

View of the Hay Block in the early 1900's when it was a two-story building. (Photo from Landmarks' files.)

vate properties in the area as a whole. It also has the added benefit of creating a very specific identity for some areas—a neighborhood sense to relate to."

In addition to the revolving fund and promotion of historic districts, Landmarks is committed to encour-

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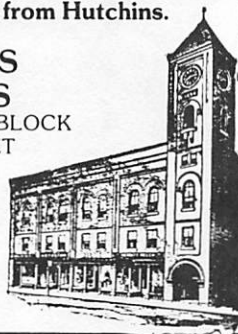
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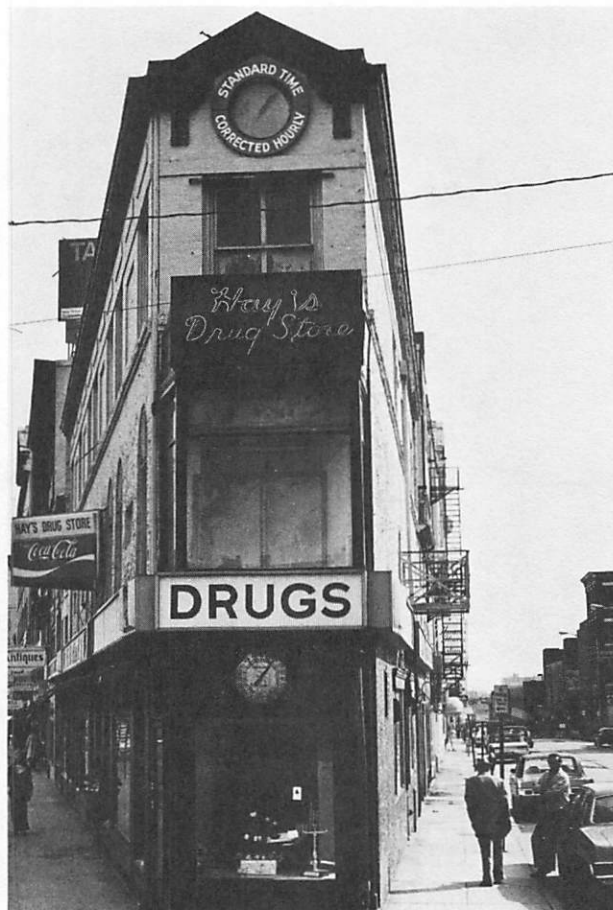
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*Hay Block in 1978—
before restoration by
the Revolving Fund.
(Photo by Jane
Pollom.)*

raging people to maintain their old buildings in good condition, and to preserve the original character of buildings as much as possible when major work must be done on them. Several Landmarks committees are involved in this effort. The Advisory Service works directly with individuals needing advice about renovations of their buildings. The Research committee assists those who want to learn the histories of their properties, and the Marker committee awards Landmarks markers to buildings that are good, well-maintained examples of their architectural style.

The Education committee works on a community level, organizing walking tours, slide lectures, preservation week activities, and giving a docent (lecturer) training course twice a year. When Landmarks first started there were four or five people interested in the annual course; now it's eighty people each taking the twice-yearly docent training.

The Special Events committee puts on the well-attended Noon Lecture

series each Wednesday in February at the First Parish Church. This year the topics covered the history of Portland from its beginning in 1632 up to the present day. The Membership committee does what you would expect it to, and successfully. Landmarks has a membership of a thousand—a good proportion of a city of 60,000.

Six times a year Landmarks puts out the "Landmarks Observer," a sixteen-page newspaper which has been called the "window" of the organization. It provides a forum for the ideas of people working in the organization, publishing articles about preservation projects, individuals involved in preservation, local history and architecture, and Landmarks programs and activities. Five thousand copies are circulated in winter, 10,000 in summer.

One example of the way Landmarks functions is the rescue operation of the Butler School building in the west end of the city. The city declared the school surplus and asked for propos-

als for its future. It received three, all centered on demolition and the creation of a parking lot. Landmarks was interested, and developed a plan for converting the school to housing. Encouraged by what Landmarks had done, a private builder submitted a similar proposal, and was then willing to work with Landmarks in designing the exterior to retain as much of its original character as possible. Presented with two well-thought-out schemes for getting good use out of the old building, city council proceeded to vote against demolition. Eventually the school was converted (though by a different builder) into federally funded housing for the elderly.

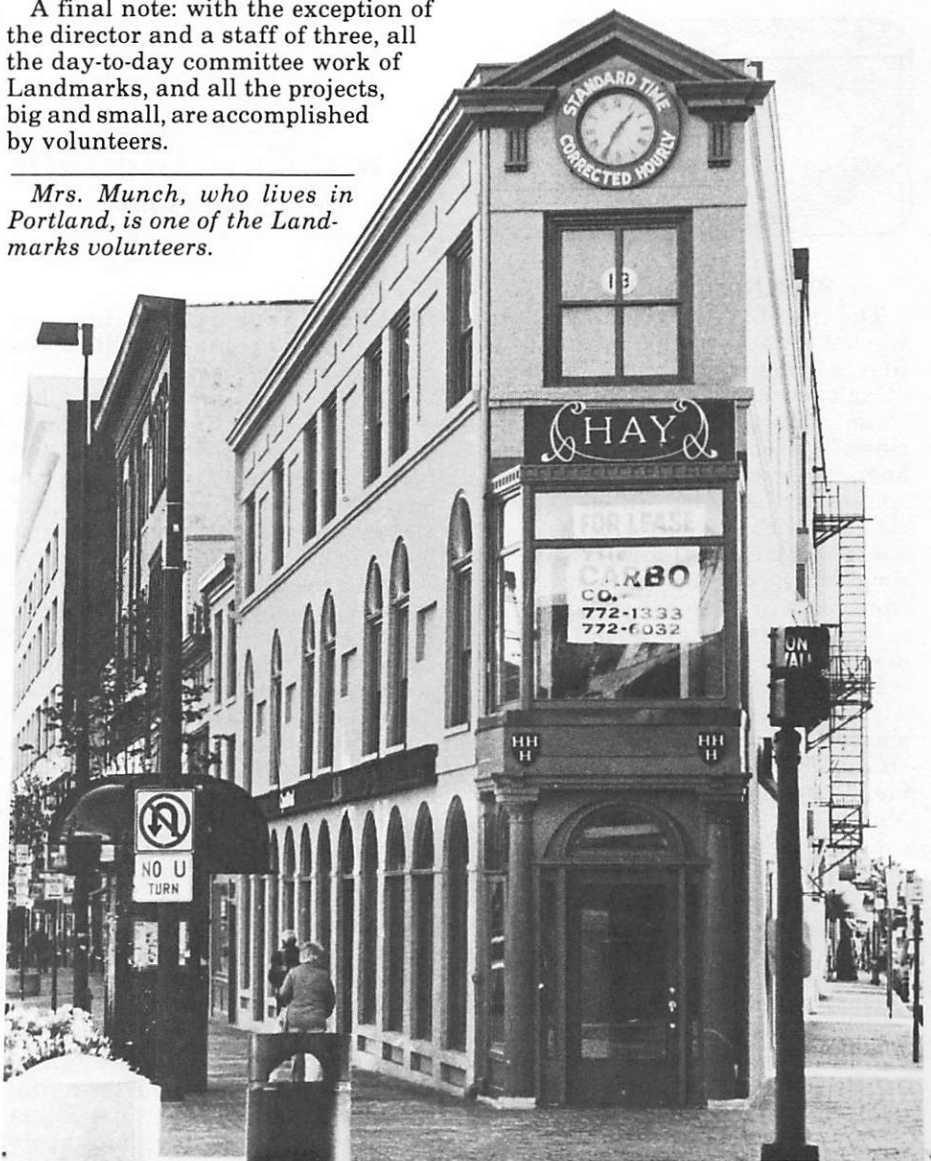
Patricia Anderson has said, "What Landmarks wanted to do was to introduce the idea of converting the building rather than demolishing it. Landmarks has learned that instead of saying, 'you can't do this, you can't do this,' we need to have a concrete suggestion of what can be done. It has become clear ever since Union Station was torn down that just yelling and screaming about tearing things down doesn't do any good unless you have an idea, and preferably cash, to do something else. Landmarks people have put a lot of time and effort into acting as an incentive to private profit operations to take on buildings Landmarks felt should be saved."

As Paula Craighead put it, "We are getting away from the crisis approach. We don't wait until things have reached the crisis stage any more. We get to planning board meetings, and we talk with developers or leaders of institutions that are planning expansions, for example. At the first whiff of something happening, we don't wait and then grandstand at the last minute, rather we immediately talk with the people involved and try to present constructive alternatives to demolition."

Both Portland and Landmarks have come a long way in the eighteen years since Landmarks was no more than a strongly held idea in the minds of a few people. Portland still has economic problems, but the overall attractiveness and livability of the city has changed much for the better. Landmarks can take some credit for that, and plans in the future to continue demonstrating that preserving the best of this old city is good for everybody.

A final note: with the exception of the director and a staff of three, all the day-to-day committee work of Landmarks, and all the projects, big and small, are accomplished by volunteers.

Mrs. Munch, who lives in Portland, is one of the Landmarks volunteers.



Hay Block after restoration—in September, 1980. (Photo by Mo Cooling.) Note the return to the earlier architectural detail and the new restrained use of signs.



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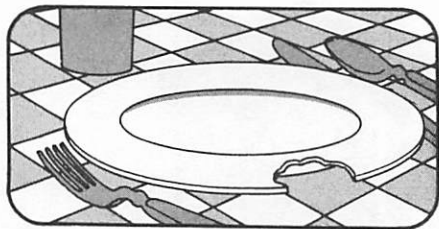
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SPRING CLEANING

The rite of spring cleaning began when the first cave woman said to the first cave man at the vernal equinox, "Can't we do something about all those mammoth bones in the hall closet?" From that moment on he knew he was licked and joined his spouse in the yearly ritual of cave cleaning with stoic fortitude. He did it out of self-defense as well, to save the rough drafts of his cave illustrations from his wife's irrepressible urge to junk anything that wasn't nailed down.

Post-Neolithic spring cleaning is still a ritual, though the cave has long since given way to more elegant—and cleanable—dwellings. It is also flexible, occurring at any time between March and June. In New England, the urge to begin spring cleaning is almost biological. Puritan heritage aside, on those first warm days, who can resist the impulse to race through the house throwing windows open as fast as possible?

There are days, as we all know too well, when the climbing sunlight hits places in the house best left unilluminated. The sight of these erstwhile hidden corners triggers a fundamental cleaning drive in nearly everyone. It must be related to what makes birds migrate. Somehow the cobwebs or dirty molding can be ignored in the winter when they are in darkness most of the time. After the equinox and approaching the solstice, no such luck. Those places will no longer retreat into shadow, and thus the cleaning drive is activated.

I find a profound sense of accomplishment in choosing to clean the most wretched and yucky places in the house in the spring. Such cleaning also has a metaphoric value that I increasingly appreciate.

My favorite crummy places are underneath the refrigerator (including the drainage pan), and between and behind the washer, dryer, and stove. The barn also gives me fits. During most of the year the size of the

Food For Thought by Lucia Owen

fits I have about cleaning these places is directly proportional to the amount of time that is *not* available to do the cleaning. The metaphor works out this way: if any one of those places does get cleaned, I feel that matching crannies of my brain are equally scoured and swept clean, so I sleep the sleep of the just. Let's hear it for rebirth.

Spring cleaning also involves throwing things away, or at least recognizing all the things you'll throw away next time. This year we parted with six to eight no-refund soda bottles kept for making beer, which we never did; cubic yards of styrofoam peanuts kept from many Christmas mailings; four tubes of part A of an epoxy requiring part B; and paint cans in which the brushes had set up. That was just for starters.

In New England the urge to begin spring cleaning is almost biological . . . it must be related to what makes birds migrate.

The urge to throw things away also sneaks up on me in front of the refrigerator. The refrigerator, after all, is another of those places that shouts for attention in the spring, especially if you have just cleaned the oven. But, contrary to everything else, the refrigerator with its zillions of little dishes full of god-knows-what does not frustrate me in the least. Leftovers do not pose a threat. No matter how they seem to conspire against me, they do not give me fits. Instead, I simply incorporate them into fillings for crêpes and achieve a rebirth—or at least a transformation that makes everything happy, down to the deepest corners of my mind.

Crêpes really are within the range of any cook. They do probably need some de-mystifying, since they suggest chic people having late lunch in a small restaurant full of wicker, butcher-block tables, and plants. I am sure that the crêpe was invented spe-

cifically for giving leftovers new identity. A look at some possible fillings may help unveil the mystery. The fillings are as easy or fancy as the cook wishes and can turn crêpes into a main course or a dessert.

The main course crêpe filling can use the simplest ingredients. One of our favorite combinations is leftover cooked chicken or turkey, chopped ham, perhaps some broccoli, added to some sautéed onions and held together with a mornay sauce. Save some of the mornay to put over the assembled crêpes, then sprinkle a lot of Swiss cheese over everything and heat until the cheese melts. Spinach, mushrooms, stews, all with some kind of sauce to hold them together, make delicious fillings as well. Or try a combination of ingredients that a tomato sauce can hold together, like eggplant, zucchini, and garlic topped with parmesan cheese.

Crêpes are merely casseroles presented in edible containers. Every Yankee knows that the only limits to making a good casserole are the state of the refrigerator and the state of mind.

Dessert Crêpes

Dessert crêpes can elevate the most ordinary dinner to the sublime. Concoctions of all sorts abound, from the standard crêpes Suzettes to large cakes made of piles of flat crêpes with interesting goodies between the layers, like almond butter cream and cooked apples. Each crêpe can become a portable cheesecake with the following fillings:

- 8 oz. softened cream cheese
- 1/2 stick softened sweet butter or margarine
- 1-1/2 tsp. vanilla
- 1 tsp. grated lemon rind.

Beat the cream cheese and butter until they are fluffy, then add the rest of the ingredients. Spread each crêpe to the edge with filling and roll it up. Put all the crêpes together in a shallow baking dish and bake in a moderate oven until the filling is bubbly. Serve them topped with apricot jam thinned with a little orange juice. Any sort of preserve will do, however. I have some strawberry jam that didn't quite set up, and some blueberry jam as well. Both will help create the illusion of cheesecake.

An English friend of ours who grew up in France associates his childhood with one kind of sweet crêpe in par-

But no matter how they seem to conspire against me, leftovers do not give me fits. Instead, I simply incorporate them into fillings for crêpes and achieve a rebirth . . .

ticular. With any kind of choice, he will always select this one. It is so simple that I am embarrassed to call it a recipe. Allowing about two crêpes per person, squeeze fresh lemon juice over each flat crepe; then sprinkle powdered sugar, using a small strainer to make the sugar fine. Roll or fold each crêpe into quarters and arrange on a plate. Sprinkle a bit more lemon juice and sugar over everything and serve with a few lemon wedges as garnish.

Having thus successfully put the cart before the horse, or the filling before the crêpe; we may consider the batter and crêpe construction.

Do not be intimidated by making them. They are as far from "gourmet" as love from lies or truth from art. "Gourmet," remember, only means that the cook has paid attention to the ingredients and used some imagination.

Basic Crêpe Batter

1 c. flour
2/3 cup each milk & water
3 large eggs
1/4 tsp. salt
3 Tbsp. melted butter or margarine
For dessert crepes: several Tbsp. brandy, rum, etc.

Place the flour in a bowl and blend in the milk and water using a wire whip. Beat until smooth. Beat in the rest of the ingredients. *Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let the batter stand for at least an hour.* This last is important, otherwise the crêpes will be leathery. To cook them, select a pan that will yield the size crêpes you need. I use a 6" skillet, but for variety, I have made huge dinner crêpes in the 12" spider.

Heat the pan on medium high until a drop of water bounces; then put in about half a Tablespoon of butter, swirling the pan to coat it. For a 6" crêpe, pour about 1/4 cup batter in and swirl it around to coat the bottom of the pan. Do this quickly and return any excess batter to the bowl. Let the crêpe cook for about a minute, then flip it using a thin metal spatula and cook for another thirty seconds.

After some initial practice, you'll be able to judge the heat of the pan and acquire the needed speed and dexterity. I usually regard the first crêpe in any batch as the sacrificial one. After I rip that one or it sticks, the rest are fine. There should be no need to butter the pan after the first time. All in all, the actual cooking time is about 20 minutes per batch. The time is well spent because crêpes freeze well and can always be on file, so to speak.

One final piece of prejudice. I have never thought much of the devices marketed as crêpe cookers. A small seasoned iron or enamel skillet does the job, but if you are the panicky sort, some gadget with a non-stick surface might keep the blood pressure down.

If you haven't tried making crêpes, they are well worth the initial effort. They will admirably gratify the appetite after a day of even the most voracious spring cleaning.

Lucia Owen is a teacher of English at Gould Academy in Bethel. Semi-regularly, her column in BitterSweet gives a new meaning to the words "Yankee" and "gourmet."

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Les Grandes Vacances / The Big Vacation

by Marie Galland

"En avril n'ôte aucun fil" . . . ce vieux proverbe français eut raison, printemps fut froid et pluvieux, et les soirées auprès d'un feu des bois ne furent guère écourtées.

On peut maintenant se préparer pour un bel été. Dans le Maine, c'est généralement une saison pour agréable, beaucoup de soleil, des journées bien chaudes, des nuits fraîches. Le Maine nous offre aussi des vagues de chaleur—tres humide—qui seraient difficile à supporter si ce n'était la proximité des lacs et de l'océan.

Avec l'été, ce sera l'époque des grandes vacances, celle où les enfants seront libérés de toute obligation scolaire; ils le choisissent d'occupations agréables: vélo, natation, lecture, promenades, pique-niques, baseball . . .

Me reviennent à la mémoire des souvenirs de jeunesse, entr'autres ceux des étés passés dans le Maine en France. On se retrouvait être cousins et cousines, âges de quatorze à quinze ans; on s'amusait beaucoup! Citadins, nous étions aussi pensionnaires pendant l'année scolaire, la perspective d'un séjour à la campagne nous exaltait! Nous allions jouir d'une grande liberté et de beaucoup d'espace. Cette liberté allait pourtant être sous le contrôle d'une tante sévère, mais peu importait, car, après des mois passés en ville et en pension, les vacances, ce serait le paradis . . .

C'était dans une vieille demeure en pierre que nous allions loger. Le bâtiment le plus ancien date de XV^{me} siècle et comprend des salles qui nous paraissaient immense, mais surtout, il y avait une chambre surnommée la chambre de Chevalier. On y accédait par un vieil escalier de pierre, bati en spirale, car cette salle ronde que nous trouvions mystérieuse, se trouve en haut d'une tour. La partie la moins ancienne du logis date du XVIII^{me} siècle et d'ardoises. Nous aimions imaginer que cette demeure était hantée . . .

Le jardin, sauvage, est entouré de bois, deux étangs faisaient alors parti de la propriété, l'un rempli de truites, l'autre couvert de nénuphars, c'était celui-ci que nous préférons.

Le Maine en France, plus précisément le Maine-et-Loire, car c'était vrai-

ment le lieu de ces vacances, est un beau pays vallonné et boisé; une terre riche, fertile permet l'élevage ainsi que la culture du blé, de l'orge et du seigle.

Nous nous promenions beaucoup, découvrant d'anciennes églises dans ses petits villages éloignés, de jolis chemins peu fréquentés nous dirigeaient à travers la forêt; au long des routes, ici et là, il y avait une ferme; perche sur la colline, un château.

Quelquefois, le matin, nous allions dans les pâturages pour y cueillir de très beaux champignons que notre tante cuisait pour le repas.

L'atmosphère poétique de cette région ne nous échappait pas, la nature, nous savions l'apprécier, l'imagination ne nous faisait pas défaut. Nous étions libre d'esprit et insouciant, car si nous n'étions plus des enfants, nous n'étions pas encore adultes.

Il y avait quatre ans, mes fils, à leur tour, équipés d'un sac du couchage, ont eu l'occasion de dormir dans la chambre du Chevalier. Hélas! Le vieux domaine n'appartient plus à nos cousins et une autoroute fut construite en bordure de l'ancienne propriété.

"In April, don't remove a thread . . ." This old French proverb proved to be true. Spring was cold and rainy, and evenings by a wood fire were as long as during the preceding winter months.

Now, at last, the time has come to prepare ourselves for a pleasant summer. Usually in Maine, it is a nice season with many warm, sunny days and with nights that are agreeably cool. During the summer one can expect the heat waves—very hot and humid—which would be unbearable if it was not for the proximity of the lakes and of the ocean.

Summertime is going to be a period of vacation, when children, free of all school obligations, will have the choice among agreeable activities: bicycle rides, swimming, walking, picnics, reading, baseball, etc.

Back in my memory are remembrances of my youth, recollections of past summer vacations spent in

Maine, France. Altogether, cousins fourteen and fifteen years old, we were going to enjoy several weeks vacation. During the school year we all lived in large cities, and as students we were in boarding schools. The prospect of a sojourn in the country was absolutely exhilarating. We were going to enjoy great freedom and unlimited space. However, this freedom was going to be supervised by a rather strict aunt; still, it did not matter, because after so many months spent in the city and at boarding school, vacation would be paradise.

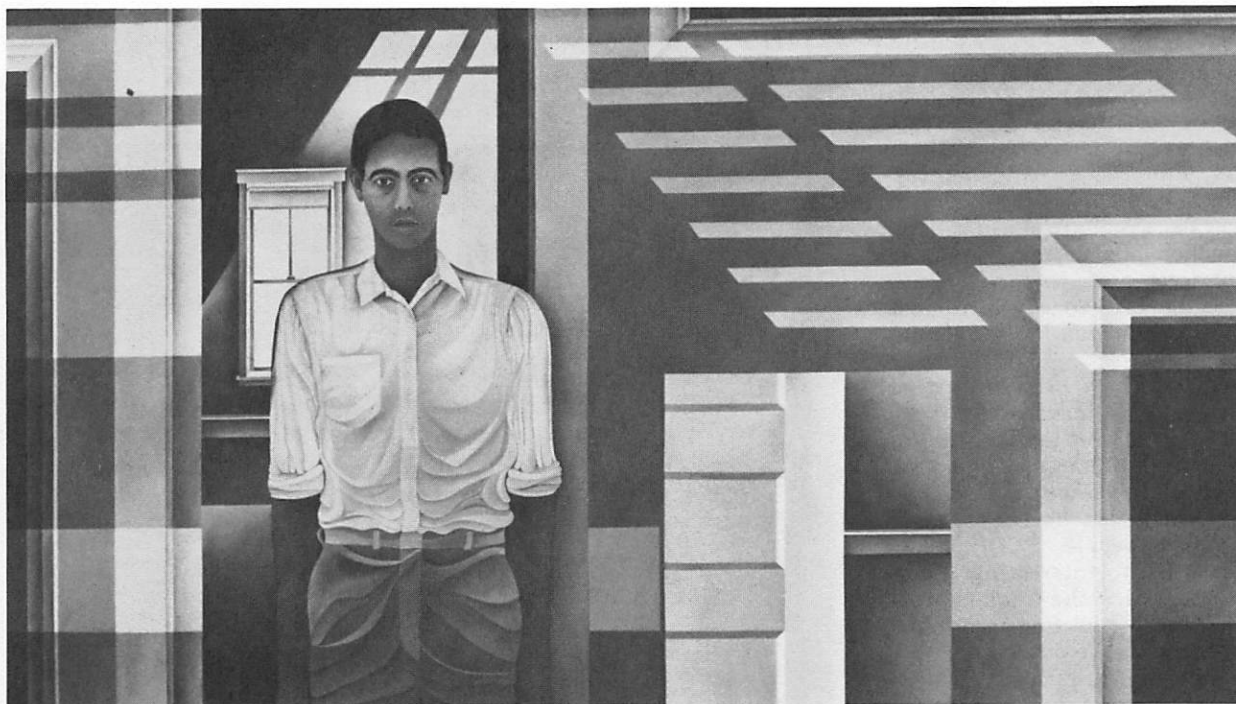
It was in an old stone house that we would be living. The most ancient part of the domain dated from the 15th century and possessed many rooms which seemed enormous to us. One room we found rather mysterious, it was named the Knight's bedroom, an old stone spiral stairway led to that room, round in shape, which was situated at the top of a tower.

The less ancient part of the building dated back to the 18th century. The entrance door to the facade had a small perron, one side of the house was ornamented with large French windows, while the other side was adjacent to a farmhouse. The roof was covered with slates. We loved to think this old place was haunted!

A wild garden was surrounded by woods on one side, and by a high stone wall on the other. At the time, two ponds were part of the estate; one was full of trout, the other was covered with waterlilies—this was our favorite one.

Maine in France, Maine-et-Loire, to be more precise since it was the location of our vacation—is a beautiful country with many hills, woods, and forests, pastures and streams. The soil, rich and fertile, permits grazing and the culture of wheat, barley, and rye.

Often we would go for long walks, discovering an old church in some far-away small village. Pretty and unfrequented roads would lead us through the forest; along the way, here and there, we would find a farm; or, perched on a hill, a castle.



Self Portrait (4' x 7', acrylic) 1977

George Fortier: Painting The Real World

by Denis Ledoux

"I'm a *Maine* artist," insists George Fortier, who is yet to do a painting of lobster traps piled high on a decaying wharf or of a farmhouse set in the snowy distance.

His work is more in the vein of mill scenes, porcine faces at a family gathering, and surreal figures set against an abstract background.

"But I'm a Maine artist in every sense," repeats Fortier, who was born in Lewiston in 1950 and graduated in 1968 from Auburn's Edward Little High School. He studied art at Ricker College in Houlton, from which he earned his B.A. in 1972. Except for a brief stay in New York City, he has spent his life in Maine. Since 1974, Fortier has maintained a studio in Lewiston.

"With that kind of background," he points out, "if I'm not a Maine artist, who is?"

His work to date consists of 24 large (7' x 10') acrylic-on-canvas paintings and a number of recent smaller pieces.

"I think people in the Maine art scene don't know what to do with me. My work isn't nostalgic or provincial. If I were from away, then they could

explain my sensibility as being that of someone from away. But I'm not."

Fortier's work is deeply rooted in his community—Franco-American Lewiston-Auburn. The early work dealt explicitly with Franco themes. *Milltown Men* (1974) depicts four men in cameos superimposed on a millyard. The four men, who might just be the same man painted four times, are devoid of expression. Here are men who have had the life worked out of them and are now blanks. *Madonna and Child* (1975), *Upper Crust* (1975), and *Memories* (1976) repeat the preoccupation with Lewiston and its Franco proletariat from which Fortier has sprung.

With the completion of *Memories*—a tableau of stupid figures set in *nouveau riche* opulence—Fortier notes that "my images went beyond the town and Maine. They went to a plane where they have their own identity which transcends these."

Throughout his subsequent work, Fortier explores archetypal realms more and more deeply. His work increasingly takes on an other-worldly aspect. What interests Fortier is not what

exterior features make Lewiston and Maine different, but what interior elements unite us to the rest of mankind. In this sense, he is a breed apart from the stereotypical "Maine" artist who seeks only to accentuate the differently picturesque in Maine.

In all his works, George Fortier is striving for subtlety of color and form, something which he says can be gotten by painting a lot and by thinking a lot about the process and content of painting.

What contributes to making Fortier unique among his many fellow artists is his desire not to hide behind craftsmanship. The transcending of craftsmanship comes under the influence of inspiration, a moment when feelings are at one with technique. It is this inspiration that makes a painting more than a "look-alike."

"Images exist on their own plane. And a piece begins asserting itself with the first lines which are laid on the canvas. As the piece develops, the existing portion must accept the addition. Paintings have a life of their own, in a sense, and this life must be respected," he says.

Fortier's paintings are mature works—even the first of them done in 1974. There's no sense of the amateur, of the aspirant to art.

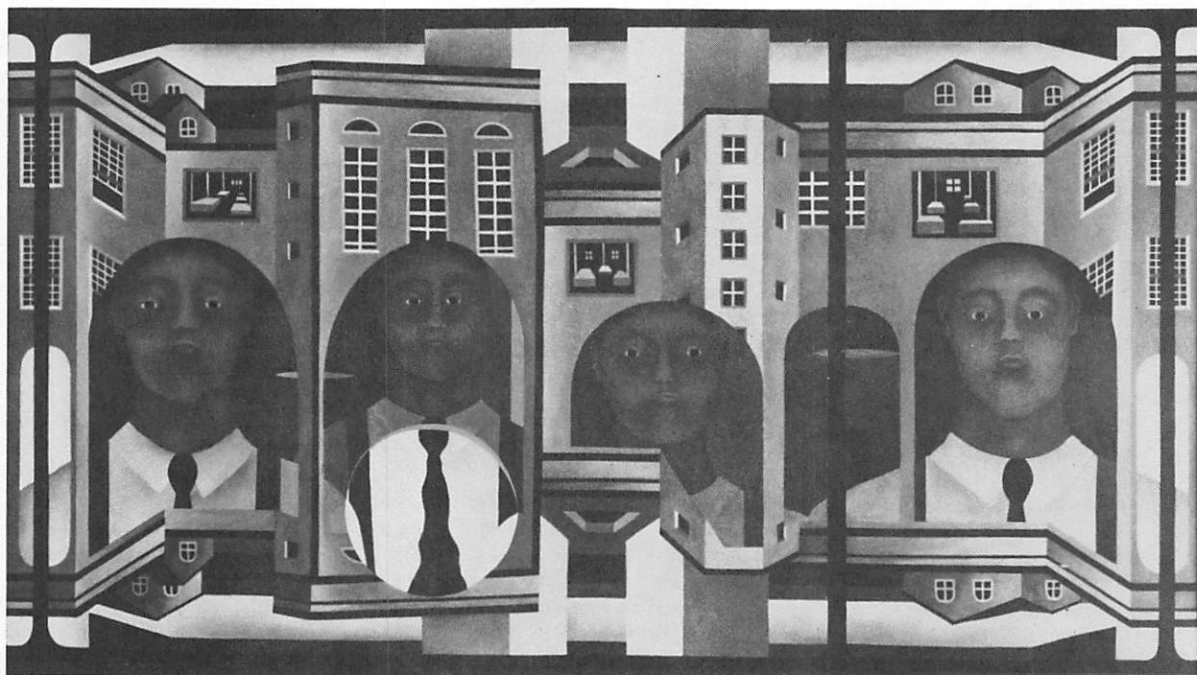
The influences that have led to this maturation are eclectic: the realists certainly, and the abstract expressionists whose mark is still obvious in his work. The great artists, of course, have touched him as much as they have everyone else. In fact, Fortier claims to be influenced by almost every painter who has done anything significant.

When George says he is influenced by the realists, he does not mean the Andrew Wyeths, but the masters of inner realities, of spiritual essences. As a result, he never uses models. His "models" are taken from the essences he perceives in people.

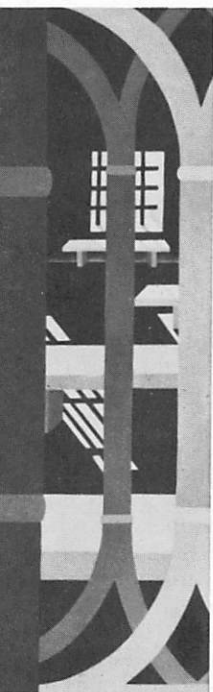
This has led to interesting occurrences. Oftentimes, the "models" materialize. One of the figures for the 1979 painting *Boyhood* came to life and walked into Auburn's No Tomatoes restaurant where Fortier has supported himself for years by waiting on tables.

"It was strange, to say the least, to have created a figure completely from

Below: Madonna and Child (4' x 7', acrylic) 1975



Above: Mill-Town Men (4' x 7', acrylic) 1974



my imagination and then to have a look-alike sitting at one of my tables a few weeks after I had finished the painting. I haven't seen this person since, nor, to my knowledge, had I ever seen him before."

Another time, he drew leaves in a painting with an oriental theme and later found he had painted bamboo leaves exactly as they appeared in an encyclopedia!

"Everything for me is influence," says George. "Lewiston, music, architecture, the formation of clouds, a color, a shape, a form, an insult, a memory, a dream, a fold in a cloth, a face, a character, a light."

George's speech is the that of a thoughtful man deeply immersed in his work, of a man who reads wisely and synthesizes profoundly: no empty chatter here.

George maintains a studio on Main Street in Lewiston. In the back are several rooms which serve as living quarters. The studio is large and high-posted. Piercing through the ceiling, as in any reputable artist's studio, is a skylight. The room is painted white and along the walls at the floor lie paintings—exciting, engaging paintings that demand a response. Outside

is the Libby Mill and the Androscoggin River.

In 1974, George came here to create an opus. For seven years, he painted quietly and industriously, *every* day for as much as 7 to 10 hours. During all this time, he felt little need to be part of exhibitions. Last spring, he came out of this long seclusion to exhibit at the Maine Coast Artists show in Rockland. Then in August came another group show at the Maine Art Gallery in Wiscasset. His first one-man show was at the Bates College Treat Gallery from August to October.

The Treat show was well received and one critic for a Portland paper called George Fortier an artist for whom to be on the look-out.

He still is not sure about exhibiting in Maine. The market here for his work is miniscule. Only in New York City and other large places, he feels, is there enough money to support the visual arts. Since he spends months on each 7' x 4' painting, he sets monetary value for his work in the thousands, "and there aren't that many people in Maine who can pay \$5,000 for a painting."

At any rate, George has decided to exhibit in Maine in order to break the long silence with which he has surrounded himself. Also breaking the silence are not only newspaper and magazine pieces on him, but a half-hour documentary being prepared by WCBB-TV (Channel 10, Lewiston) to be shown in 1982.

George Fortier does not need external approval to continue with his work. His stimulus is internal, the need to produce "a narrative, autobiographical synthesis, a fusion, forever changing, forever growing."

It is that energy which is ever present in George's work which makes it exciting, demanding, even exhausting. His studio is a special place in which Man today continues to search, to refuse to give in to meaninglessness and brutality, to the new materialism which has swept this country in the last few years. For George Fortier, painting is not only something he does but something he *is*. In these days, when it has become accepted to reduce everything to its lowest denominator, he is a man apart, a man whose life's work is truly significant.

Ledoux is a free-lance writer living in Lisbon Falls.

Below: Quarry (4' x 6', acrylic) 1980

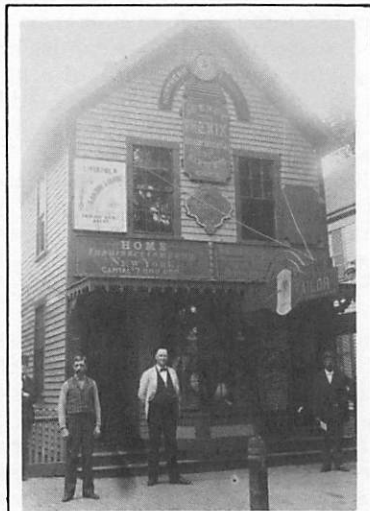


Sometimes in the early morning hours, we would be in the meadows gathering nice and large mushrooms that our aunt was going to cook for a meal.

We were very much taken by the poetic atmosphere of our surroundings. We knew how to appreciate nature. Free-spirited and unworried, we were not children anymore, yet we were not adults . . .

Five years ago it became the turn of our sons to sleep in the Knight's bedroom. Alas! The old domain does not any longer belong to our cousins, and a turnpike has been constructed along the border of the former estate.

Marie Galland lives in South Windham with her architect husband. She has led a very active life, among other things studying art and practicing sculpture in her native France and teaching at Waynflete School in Portland. She is currently a teacher at Bonny Eagle High School. One son is studying architecture; one psychology.



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TWO WOMEN

Fiction by Jean Pottle

She lifted the heavy mug down from its place on the second shelf and filled it with strong black coffee kept hot on the back of the stove. "Here, Mattie, this'll pick you up," she cried as she passed the mug across the table to her sister-in-law.

Mattie reached out a braceleted arm and nodded in thanks. Her sharp eyes noticed that Sade was putting on weight again. No wonder she's fat, she thought. There wasn't much else to do in this place except eat. Sade, she knew, was proud of her reputation as a good cook. Good thing she was, for that seemed to be all she had to show for her years on this farm. She and Eb had scraped along since Pa had died and there wasn't much to show for it. As far as Mattie could see, there wasn't a stick of new furniture in the house. Why, the very chair she was sitting in was one that had been here as far back as she could remember. The old mug which held her coffee was one that Aunt Mary had brought with her when she moved in with the family fifty years ago. The whole house felt crowded with relics of the past. Now that Eb was gone, it was going to be harder than ever for Sade to make ends meet. By now the family was probably wondering if she and Sade would pool their resources and live here together. Well, that wasn't going to happen. She'd fought to get out of this town and away from the family when she was a girl, and she had no intention of being trapped here now. She was going to be on that early afternoon train no matter what was said.

"How about a nice fresh doughnut, Mat?" Sade held out a plate full of sugared doughnuts, but her sister-in-law shook her head. Probably she was worrying about her figure, Sade thought. Mattie had always set a lot of store by the way she looked. Pa Burke used to say that there was a worn spot in front of the hall mirror where Mattie used to stand to primp.

Pa had always teased Mattie about her ways, but she had been a pretty little thing when she left home for a job in the city.

Mattie claimed to love the city, especially after she met and married a big-city lawyer. When he got into that scrape with the law, things kind of changed, though, and Mattie had gone back to work. She still worked, which was a pity for a woman past sixty who should've had time to sit back and enjoy life. She supposed Eb had been right when he insisted that Mattie was waiting for an invitation to come back to the farm. Now would be the time to get the invitation out, she supposed, but somehow she held back. Mattie's clattering heels and clinking jewelry just didn't seem to fit in this house with all its quiet memories of the past. All the peace would just drain out of this place if Mattie returned. Still, she had promised Eb, and she'd stick to it.

"Why, look at the time!" Mattie pushed her chair back, took a quick gulp of coffee, and was half-way through the dining room before Sade spoke.

"Mattie," she said, "Eb . . ."

"Why Sade, we've talked enough the past week to last a lifetime. I'm going upstairs to pack my bags. I promised Miss Carey I'd stop on my way to the station and it's almost eleven now. Remember what I said. If you get lonely and need a change, I've got an extra bed which you're welcome to."

"But Mattie, I promised,"

The words came too late. Mattie was up the stairs and out of hearing. Sade returned to the table and picked up Aunt Mary's ironstone cup. Her coffee hadn't tasted just right this morning without it, but she was sure Mattie had enjoyed seeing it again.

Jean Pottle is a teacher who lives with her family in Raymond.

FLORA SANDERS

She stayed for years
because everyone knew how happy they were
because Betty Jane came down with the
chicken pox that night
because when he gave her an African Violet she forgot
he cut down her honeysuckle that shaded the porch.
So she stayed
because she was afraid of heights
because she liked to watch the fireflies light the field
as she washed the supper dishes
because her grandmother was married to the same man
for fifty-two years
because the nights were not as long as the days
sometimes,
because what would they do without her in the choir
because she loved the jasmine in her yard
because once he cried in the Babe Ruth movie.
So she stayed
twenty-six years
before she left
taking a faded suitcase and a Buster Brown bag
full of curlers and cream
because it had rained for five days.

MY SISTER NELLIE

My sister Nellie gave me my first bath
forwent her Saturday night date that day
even though he was headed over there
to fight the bad guys.

My sister Nellie bought me my first rocking chair
my first teddy bear from her first pay check
and laughed about eating Cheerios for two
whole weeks.

My sister Nellie defended drunk uncles
against angry aunts
laughed when she ruined a hundred dollar dress
climbing a tree to flashlight Peter's jeep
out of the mud
told a cop "I WAS going one way officer"
told an accoster "I may look like a kitten
but I fight like a cat—please step aside"
drew giggles from a dying grandmother with
"Grammie if you die, I'll never speak to you again."

My sister Nellie never talked about the hard times
but she wrinkled early
and she raided refrigerators late at night.

The last time we were home
there wasn't much glimmer left in those hazel eyes
and her satin laugh was frayed
as we reminisced in Momma's backyard
drawing shade from the pecan tree
that is dying from lack of rain.

*Myra Thermaenius
Norway*

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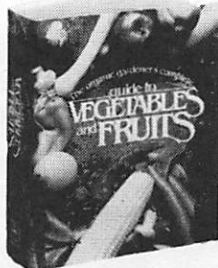
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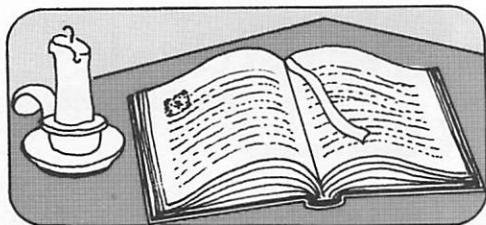
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Off The Shelf Book Reviews

by Mark Melnicove

Three books by James Koller

One Day at a Time, Pentagram Press, P.O. Box 379, Markesan, Wisc. 53946. \$5.50

Back River, Blackberry, P.O. Box 186, Brunswick, Maine 04011. \$1.75

O, Didn't He Ramble, Coyote & Bussard, c/o Subterranean Co., P.O. Box 10233, Eugene, Oregon 97440. \$4.00

All books also available from The Maine Writers and Publishers Alliance, P.O. Box 143, So. Harpswell, Maine 04079.

Poet George Oppen has written, "Poetry must be at least as good as dead silence."

Oppen's words remind me of George-town poet James Koller. I get the feeling that if he could say what he wanted to by not saying anything at all he would.

Consider his book **One Day at a Time**—11 poems, 161 words. That's a little over 12 words a poem, each word carefully chosen to mean exactly what it's supposed to mean, given when and where it appears in the poem. The placement of words and meaning is so exact, in fact, that I get the feeling the words chose him, not the other way around.

Here's the first poem in the book:

*Tracks in the snow
let me know who's there
all the rest of the year*

The man who wrote that respects animals. He'd have to in order to write those lines. He also has an understated sense of humor—very much of the backwoods variety.

Notice, too, how he has remarked on the relativity of human perception. I bet the animal that made those tracks knows where the man is *all* the time.

Of course, it's also true that the man who follows those tracks will

learn more about the animal that made them. The man will learn to recognize the traces left behind by the animal during all seasons of the year.

The man may also become friends with the animal. They might even speak.

Nature is like that—the more attention we give it, the more it gives in return.

James Koller realizes that—it's something he's learned from experience. Most remarkably, he's able to translate this experience into words, his poetry.

Perhaps translate is the wrong word here. I don't mean to imply that he changes the meaning of his experience as he says it. I think it's more accurate to say that the language he uses enables him to experience and see as he does. In other words, he's prepared to experience what's happening precisely because he's not filling up his mind with a lot of senseless chatter.

Silence, then, is the optimum medium for paying attention. We see most clearly when undistracted.

Consider this poem from his book **Back River**:

*DEER
Your body was eaten
Your hide thrown over a branch
hung stiff in the wind
I found your head where the dogs
dragged it, hung it
I watched your eyes disappear
your skin dry, your small teeth
fall*

*The brush here comes back
Nobody eats it.*

8-1-75

The man describing this deer has done more than glance. The deer head decomposes right before his very eyes, until all that is left is brush. One can feel the spirit of the deer come through the words. Although the deer's body is dead, the spirit of the deer lives on, and has touched that place forever. The poet is present as witness. He has written the history of an event that

might otherwise go unrecorded.

The words do not describe the static world. Things are in flux, yet we are also made aware of the cyclical nature of things. The poem about the animal tracks did that, too.

You've got to slow down to read this man. The slower you go, the more you get out of the poetry. Just like nature.

Again, "get out" is the wrong terminology. I should say, rather, that the more you come to know these poems, the more you get *into* them. At the same time you are getting into yourself. You are silencing your own babble. Things besides the poems are then able to speak with you.

There is a long tradition of this sort of meditative voice. For example, one need go no further (on this continent, at least) than the American Indian song. Koller has reconnected himself with this tradition.

Consider this poem from his book **O Didn't He Ramble**:

LETTER

*I didn't mean to take your Spirits
from you
They fill me now & now
I know they are not mine
They will come back to you.*

*Thunder showers in front of them
Thunder showers behind them
They will come back to you.*

*I am sending back your Spirits.
I have sent back your Spirits.*

What a beautiful prayer! Each one of us is an energy field. When we meet we trade energies. Each exchange changes us, no matter how brief or small. Some exchanges are particularly significant; we call them by various names—trauma, falling in love, religious experience, etc.

Koller is receptive and open to these exchanges. As his poem shows, they do not have to victimize us. We can use them sensibly by honoring their natural rhythms. He knows that the Spirits he took will "come back" to the person he took them from. By being conscious of this, and willing that it happen, he acts as a catalyst for the event. His poem/prayer/letter/action serves to heal. He wants to make things better. The person on the receiving end is also made aware and can work to recoup the lost spirits, healing the self.

It is not unusual for medicine men,

CLAY HAWKINS

Every now and then I think of you . . .
and remember the days
before the apathy
when I cried—
Remember following Andy around . . .
poker and *Playboy*—
pridelessly waiting, waiting, waiting
"Can we go home now?"
Home? What's that?
Remember "Hawk"
harrowing me, mean . . .
Yes, you were:
sarcastic and scathing.
Andy thought it was wit;
I thought it was hate.
I tried to fit,
but didn't
and it hurt—all that wit.
Remember the fighting
and "Hawk" hard by—
not biting your lip
but bating—

and me restlessly waiting . . .
and the feeling of hating
being the "ball and chain."
Remember the taunting me taut
'Til I cut and cried
alone in the fornicatorium—
to keep the numbness away—
And then you came in . . .
hard, hateful, mean "Hawk" . . .
And knelt by the bed
stroking my back
soft, touching my hair . . .
gentle, not crushing
my vulnerability.
Your whispering said:
"The need is for now
not for always
and the hurt
would be more in the end,"
and left it a wish.

Shannon L. Martin
Bryant Pond

shamans, and doctors to use words to heal. Next time you go to your doctor, notice how what he says to you and how he says it makes you feel. Sometimes something as simple as a careful word or touch can make all the difference in the world.

To close, I'd like to mention each book and its design. **One Day at a Time** is one of the most beautifully printed and designed books I have ever seen. Small enough to fit into your palm, the book is an exquisite example of fine letterpress work. A prefatory note, by the way, informs us of the subject matter of the poems: "Being a small gathering of poems written in Maine during the 1970's and published August of 1981 to mark the poet's return there from Washington."

Back River's design is equally noteworthy. It has a rough-hewn look since the poems are written out in what I presume to be the poet's hand. You get the feeling you are reading someone's log, something meant for intimates—a presentation without commercial interruption. All these poems are centered in Maine as well, Back River being a tidal body of water draining into the Kennebec and Sasanoa Rivers, separating Arrowsic and Georgetown. Koller lives nearby.

O, Didn't He Ramble features Koller's English on one page and a translation, in German, on the following. The poems were written in the early seventies, but not brought out until 1980. Koller was on the road from place to place when he wrote these poems, thus the title, but an ironic title, nonetheless. As a word-smith he does anything but ramble. His voice is on the mark. He gets you there and lets you find your way.



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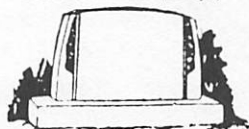
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"Western novels have got to be on the level," Clarence Mulford said. And yet he wrote Hopalong Cassidy from 1904 until 1926 without ever having seen the west.

plate, endeavoring to prove that a cowboy could hit an adversary who was completely ensconced by ricocheting a bullet off a rock.

In order to carry out his experiments with absolute safety to others, Mulford purchased 55 acres of land behind his home that included a high ridge for a backdrop. Mulford specialized in experimenting with big-calibered guns and maximum loads. The cartridges had to be hand-loaded. He once wrote of his experiment:

"After several years of playing with such guns and cartridges, I am beginning to learn something about them. I am too nervous to ever become a really good shot, but to my mind these pistols beat golf clubs a mile."

This nervousness was a contributing factor to his backing out of a promise to help hunt down and shoot a wild steer that was on the loose in North Fryeburg. This incident occurred not too long before his death, and in all fairness to him he had by then become rather shaky.

Mulford had the Colt Company make a pair of high-caliber single action revolvers out of a special quality of steel, and he personally designed sights that would enable him to hit targets accurately up to 500 and 600 yards.

Among Mulford's many contributions to his adopted community was organizing a community rifle range and promoting homemade bullet production.

Not all of Mulford's hobbies were linked with his writing. In fact, Mulford felt very strongly that he should be involved in activities that would get him away from the typewriter. This is why he held onto his Civil Service job in New York long after he had become financially independent through his writing. "I needed another job as a sweetener," he once explained, "to take me away from the typewriter—make me want to get home and pick up a pen."

Stamp collecting was one of his early hobbies. He particularly collected foreign stamps and he collected

for quantity rather than quality.

George Roberts, the older of the two surviving Fryeburg residents who played poker with Mulford, vividly recalls Mulford's affinity for jig-saw puzzles.

"He always kept several tables with jig-saw puzzles which he spent hours working on. Some of these puzzles were as large as five or six square feet."

The older citizens of Fryeburg still talk about the time that William Boyd visited Fryeburg to meet the man who created the character that helped to make Boyd a well-known actor. Emily Mulford Perkins, Clarence's stepdaughter, recalled the event:

"My son was very small, and he got a great kick out of it."

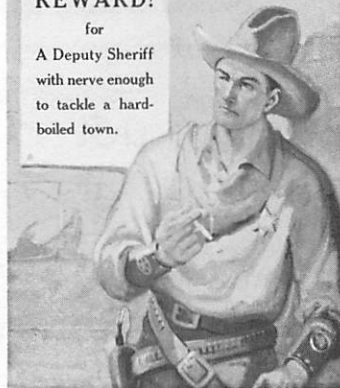
David Hastings has a photograph of his father, Hugh Hastings, standing on Mulford's steps with William Boyd.

How did Mulford feel about Boyd? Well, he liked him as a person, but he was always disappointed with the way Hollywood had Boyd portraying Hopalong. The Hopalong Cassidy of the movies and the Hopalong of Mul-

THE DEPUTY SHERIFF by Clarence E. Mulford

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to tackle a hard-
boiled town.



*Book cover from one of
Clarence Mulford's novels*

"Never include anything in a novel that can't be proved," Mulford insisted, so he spent much of his time experimenting with high-caliber guns and maximum loads.

Mulford's novels were poles apart. Bill Boyd as Cassidy was much too debonair. He did not represent the true cowboy of the Old West and certainly not the hard-bitten Hopalong created by Mulford's pen—as anyone who has ever seen a Hopalong Cassidy movie and has also read any of Mulford's novels will realize.

It took a very special type of woman to adjust to the world in which Clarence Mulford lived. Even with all his hobbies, and the unusually late hours he kept, and his dedication to his work, Mulford did not neglect his wife and stepdaughter. A truly great love story could be written based on the life that Eva and Clarence Mulford shared together.

"My stepfather loved my mother very much," explained Emily Mulford Perkins, who still resides in Fryeburg. "He was good to us both. He used to read each new chapter to us as he wrote it. It was very nice; we loved to have him read to us."

Eva Wilkinson Mulford was a lovely and remarkably talented person, especially in the field of music. She is fondly remembered by all who knew her. She took an active interest in community affairs and was much more outgoing than her husband. She belonged to the Fryeburg Women's Club, aided many who were affected by the Great Depression, and took an active interest in school affairs. The Mulfords set up a fund so that needy children could have milk to drink at school.

She was a constant inspiration and supporter of her husband and often took an active part in his hobbies. Mulford made large models of ships, boats, stagecoaches, and sundry kinds of wagons. He was as meticulously accurate in constructing his models as he was in writing his novels. Eva contributed her talents by doing some of the very intricate work and the upholstery on a magnificent Concord stage.

During the last two years of her life, Eva suffered more and more from a deteriorating heart disease. And on

September 9, 1933, she passed quietly away, and a part of Clarence died with her. Although he would continue to live an active life until his own death many years later, it has been said that he was the loneliest man in town.

Eva loved the glacial hills, the forests, the lakes, the Saco River and the fertile green valley through which it runs. Because of her intrinsic love for the natural world around her, Mulford was determined to erect a suitable monument that would endure for eternity. He engaged a veteran Maine guide to search the area for an imposing glacial megalith. A five-ton boulder was located about five miles from town; and it took a ten-ton tractor, two stone drags, and several men to haul the megalith from the spot where it was found to the cemetery. The task was performed without scraping any of the moss or lichens that appeared like "green fuzz on rainy days in summer."

Mulford described this monument of love as "eternally typifying Eva. Thirty thousand years ago the glaciers brought it down from the Laurentian Mountains, and I like to think they brought it down for her."

Eva was fond of playing her big piano for her husband. Four years after her death, Mulford wrote:

"My wife was a fine pianist, and her big piano is just as she left it 3-1/2 years ago. Its great lid is down and its last piece is just where she left it." The piece was Chopin's *Nocturne in C-Sharp Minor*.

By the early 1940's, the total earnings directly and indirectly resulting from Mulford's writings were so great that Clarence came to the conclusion that he was writing for the government. His novels alone had sold over four million copies. Then, of course, there were the royalties flowing in from movie rights to his books, from magazines, newspapers, comic books, and radio rights. He decided to retire from the typewriter and devote the remainder of his life to his many hobbies.

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Not long after his retirement, Mulford was hit with two more tragedies. First his mother died in 1943. Then her death was followed in 1947 by a fire in his home that damaged or destroyed part of his collection of Western memorabilia. It was estimated that the fire caused over \$30,000 in damages.

George Roberts rescued Mulford, who was sleeping soundly at the time the fire broke out.

"Mulford was a night owl," Roberts, who later repaired the damage done to the house, recalls. "He would sit up all night and sleep 'til noon. Even though, if I remember correctly, it was fairly late in the forenoon, we found Mulford in bed and almost overcome with smoke. We carried him out through a window on a cot and set him on top of the porch roof.

Other reports have indicated that the fire broke out early in the morning. At any length, poor Mulford was eventually left lying stark naked on a stretcher in front of the house until he was taken to a hospital.

Mulford never fully recovered from the damage done to his lungs from inhaling so much smoke. On May 8, 1956, he left his home carrying an old suitcase, bound for the Maine Central Hospital to undergo chest surgery. He never returned alive. He failed to respond to surgery and died at the age of 73, just two days after being admitted to the hospital. The pastor of the New Jerusalem Church in Fryeburg performed the religious services, and Mulford's frail body was laid to rest beside the grave of his beloved wife.

The fact that the name Clarence Mulford is seldom if ever mentioned in literary circles today is not surprising, even though more copies of his novels have been sold than those of any other writer of Western fiction except Zane Grey. Other than Owen Wistor's *The Virginian*, Conrad Richter's *Sea of Grass*, and Edna Ferber's *Cimarron*, few Western novels have succeeded in being allotted a place among the American classics. Regardless of how popular writers of Western fiction may be, literary critics have had a tendency to ignore them.

Nevertheless, Clarence Mulford was a true artist with the pen, who accurately recorded the life and times of the Old West. He was an authority in the field of Western Americana. Bret Harte and Mark Twain are colossal

names in American literature, owing much to their portrayal of local color of the Old West. Both gained much popularity through extensive lecture tours throughout the United States, and Mark Twain's fame was enhanced even more by his travels abroad. Mulford was an introvert and seldom travelled, but local color permeates each of his novels. He has succeeded in preserving the speech, traditions, and customs of one of the most colorful and picturesque phases of American history. He successfully combined the romanticism of James Fennimore Cooper with the realism of Owen Wistor; this is why many of his novels merit a special place of honor among the literary works that portray the Old West as it really was. It is somewhat ironic that Clarence Mulford the author has been almost completely overshadowed by the colorful character he created—for who among us has not heard of Hopalong Cassidy?

But if Clarence Mulford has been largely forgotten by the literary public, he has not been forgotten by the people of Fryeburg and adjacent towns. While Mulford lived, many Fryeburg citizens considered him rather eccentric and aloof. Certainly he was misunderstood, but so was Henry David Thoreau and many other talented writers throughout American literature. But when Mulford took leave of this world, he left the people of Fryeburg a legacy that evinced his love for the town and his concern for its future and the future of the generations to come. In honor of his beloved wife, Eva Mulford, he established a two thousand dollar music scholarship in her name to be awarded annually to a Fryeburg Academy student wishing to further his or her education in the field of music.

He left his models, guns, his valuable collection of books on the West, copies of his own novels, magazines containing his stories, and many other treasured memorabilia to the Fryeburg Women's Club with money enough to build an addition to the library where his possessions are currently on display. It seems altogether fitting that George Roberts, a member of the "Fo-Castle" group, would be the one to construct the Clarence E. Mulford room.

Today there is a sizeable trust fund that continues to grow from royalties resulting directly and indirectly from

the many successful years that Mulford devoted to writing Western fiction and non-fiction. The trust fund is administered by a committee of local citizens and is designed to be used in ways that will benefit local organizations and even individuals who are deemed worthy of financial help in establishing a business, a farm, or obtaining a home. Fryeburg Academy, which Mulford felt could best serve the area by remaining a private institution, is a major recipient of this special trust fund.

Clarence E. Mulford loved the town of Fryeburg and was greatly concerned that it might someday become a metropolis similar to Portland. For those who know the lovely, picturesque town, it is obvious that Mulford's fears for its future were unwarranted, but perhaps understandable. The beautiful stately elms that helped to establish Fryeburg as one of the most beautiful towns in the hinterlands of Western Maine unfortunately fell victim to the Dutch Elm disease, but all else that Mulford knew and cherished so dearly remains as he knew it during the years he lived and wrote in Fryeburg.

Author's Acknowledgement

I have been extremely fortunate to have received so much cooperation from a number of people who knew Clarence Mulford—such as his step-daughter Emily Mulford Perkins, George Roberts and David Hastings. I am profoundly grateful to Althea Sawyer, librarian in Steep Falls; and Dorothy Cook, librarian in Fryeburg, for their extremely helpful contributions toward helping me locate material. Both libraries are paragons of what good community libraries should be. It seemed most appropriate that I do much of my work in the aura of the Clarence Mulford room at the Fryeburg library. Special acknowledgement should be given to the very excellent thesis done in 1966 at the University of Maine, Orono, by Joseph A. Perham—Reflections on Hopalong Cassidy, A Study of Clarence E. Mulford. Without this definitive work, I would not have gleaned the material that I have on the man.

Jack Barnes is a teacher at Bonny Eagle High School and at York Community College. He resides on a farm in Hiram.

HEADING OUT: _____ CORNISH



Michael Silvestri—Classical Guitarist

Since the New Lincoln Hotel in Cornish reopened over a year ago as the Cornish Country Inn, its reputation for excellent food and fine hospitality 'midst a lovely Victorian decor has spread far beyond the borders of Maine. But if the inn has regained much of the fine reputation it enjoyed for many decades as an excellent place to dine, it has rapidly blossomed as a Mecca for musicians, writers, and other talented people. The proprietors, George and Judy Larkin Moneyhun, were for many years members of the *Christian Science Monitor* staff in Boston, and George has successfully published the well-researched novel, *The Mill Girls*.

In February, at a time when New Englanders were beginning to tire of the long, hard winter, Saturday night diners who came to sup in an atmosphere of candlelight and a cheery fire in the dining room fireplace were treated to the magic strings of the classical guitar played by Steep Falls' very talented young guitarist—Michael Silvestri.

His wide repertoire of soft Spanish sounds played in somewhat of an Italian style held many of the diners in a state of rapture during his performance. He was an instant success and continues to perform every Saturday at the inn throughout the dinner hour. A true measuring stick of his popularity has been the number of people who have made dining and listening to Michael Silvestri a weekly Saturday evening affair; and they linger long after the last morsel of food has been consumed and the candles have burned low.

The twenty-eight-year-old guitarist was born in New York City and attended Deer Park High School in Long Island. After high school he attended Suffolk Community College and studied music at Hofstra University. He later studied the classical guitar at a place called the Guitar Workshop, located on Long Island, and in New Hampshire under Walter Spaulding—a student of Roy De La Torre, one of the truly great contemporary classical guitarists. Silvestri was fortunate enough to take one master's course under De La Torre himself. But Silvestri attributes Julian Bream, whom he refers to as "the greatest guitarist in the world," as having had the most influence on his career. Segovia has also been an inspiration.

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Michael Silvestri is also an accomplished performer of American folk music. It was while performing as a folk musician in coffee houses that he met his wife, Susan, who is an artist in her own right with the guitar, stringed bass, and Appalachian dulcimer. The two performed as part of a trio in coffee houses and at universities throughout the Northeast.

"I used to do all sorts of traditional American folk music," explains Silvestri during a brief intermission. "At the same time I always studied classical music. I did a lot of research and got very involved with the blue style and all the styles—finger-pick style, bottleneck style, and what would be considered today as a contemporary ragtime style. Basically a blue style is very primitive. If you go into the backwoods and listen to an eighty-year-old person playing the blues, you would get an interesting sound; then you take his ideas and utilize them and expand the format. There is a whole school of contemporary ragtime guitar players, and I spend a lot of time with that."

Michael and Susan Silvestri came to Maine five years ago. "We wanted to live in the country in a 100-year-old house. We had an idea of a way of living and we sort of pursued it."

When the Silvestris first moved to Maine, they performed as a duo at the Arts Center in Bath and in various places in Portland. Then they met fiddle player Bill Booth and formed an old-time stringed band.

"We all had an interest in the same music. It is totally different from the classical," Silvestri explained.

Two years ago last October, the Silvestris found their dream home in Steep Falls. Shortly after they moved into their new home—on Halloween night—their daughter Christina was born.

Silvestri's greatest aspiration is to be able to make an adequate living with his music. The move to Steep Falls and the birth of their child meant breaking up their stringed band. Silvestri, however, is currently giving guitar lessons to a few local youths and composing. He composed many of the pieces which are included in his repertoire, and he hopes to market his compositions and do some recordings. He is also hoping that

more people will seek him out for guitar lessons.

The Silvestris came to Maine because they felt it is a better place to rear their family. They are a very talented young couple with definite goals in life.

"I know I have a difficult road ahead of me," commented the soft-spoken Silvestri. "It is not easy to make a living with the classical guitar, but it is what I like most to do."

It is also what he does best. It took courage to leave New York City, where there are far more opportunities for such a talented young man, and to settle on the fringes of the tiny hamlet of Steep Falls. It is to be hoped that he will fully realize his dream to be a success in the field of music. In the meantime, those who come to the Cornish Country Inn are thoroughly enjoying the haunted but magical strings of Michael Silvestri.

Jack Barnes
Hiram



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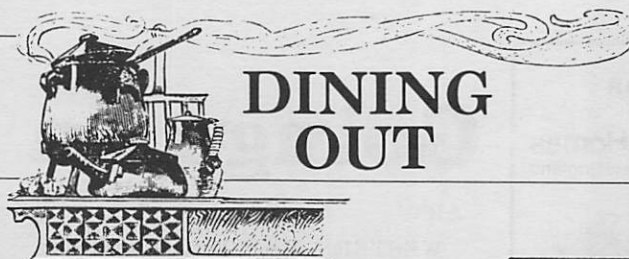
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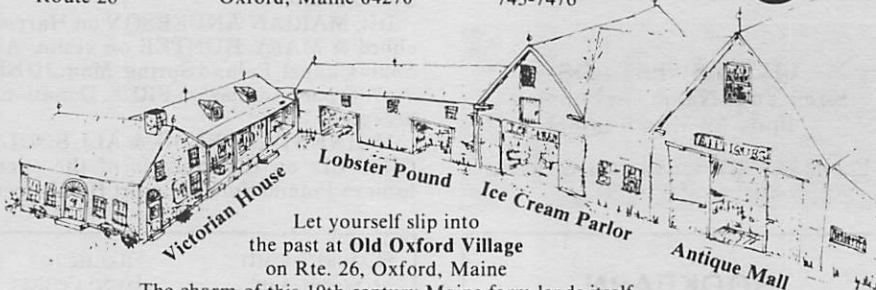
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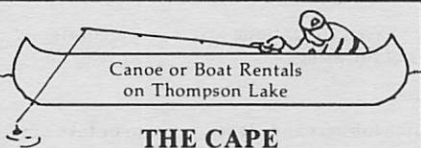
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TENNIS: Instructional Tennis (all ages kids; possibly some adults) Cottage St. Courts, 2 days a week through summer. Adult Summer Tennis League planned. 6th Annual TENNIS TOURNAMENT in AUGUST.

GYMNASTICS: Some afternoons after Sun Fun. Saturday Travelling Gymnastics being planned for West Paris, Waterford, Oxford, Buckfield (two wks. in each town).

4th ANNUAL WOODY ALLEN MEMORIAL ROAD RACE: with the Bean Hole Bean Festival, JULY 31st. Phone 743-7184 for more details on any of these programs.

SPECIAL

HARRISON OLD HOME DAYS: "Harrison in the Swing Years" - a celebration of the 1930's & 40's, JULY 8 (Campers' Night), JULY 9 (Kiddie Parade), JULY 10 (Grand Parade). Nightly entertainment, hourly raffles, craft shows, carnival events and rides.

RINGLING BROS. BARNUM & BAILEY CIRCUS: Cumberland County Civic Center, Portland, JUNE 1 - 6.

AMERICAN HERITAGE PARADE: Congress St. (Longfellow Sq. to Monument Sq.), Portland, JUNE 5.

OLD PORT EXCHANGE FESTIVAL: Portland, JUNE 12.

SAILEBRATION 350 YACHT RACE, Portland Harbor, JUNE 12.

ETC.

BRICK STORE EXCHANGE: Behind Brick Store Museum, 4 Dane St., Kennebunk. Consignment crafts, primarily from Maine. (Consignor gets 75%.) Open Tues. - Sun. 10-4. To assist the Exchange or place a craft, call Gertrude Reoch at 967-3742 or the Exchange at 985-3639.

HOSPITAL AUXILIARY LUNCHEON: High Head, Harpswell, JUNE 2.

ANNUAL BAZAAR SUPPER & RAFFLE: St. Mary's Church Hall, Wilton, JUNE 26.

SAILING REGATTA: North end of China Lake, China, JUNE 28-30.

BitterSweet welcomes placement of any listing in this column—FREE of CHARGE. Just send us a typed announcement 6 weeks prior to the publication date (i.e. June 15 for August publication) and we will print what space allows.

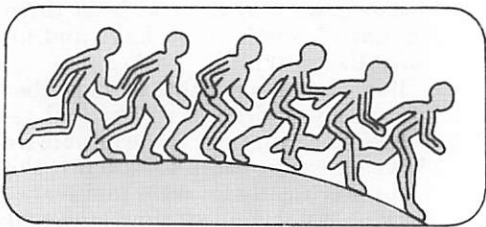
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Medicine For The Hills

by

Michael A. Lacombe, M.D.

MENINGITIS, Part II Treatment Of Bacterial Meningitis

(continued from last month)

About a third of patients with bacterial meningitis will have seizures. Double vision, coma, palsy, and speech difficulties are other complications. Prompt and proper treatment of the bacterial infection usually results in a rapid recovery from these neurologic complications.

The most crucial laboratory test to diagnose and treat bacterial meningitis is the lumbar puncture, or spinal tap. Through careful examination of the spinal fluid with special stains and counting of white blood cells, the particular offending organism can often be identified immediately at the time of the lumbar puncture. This immediate identification of the stained bacteria is important. Remember that *N. meningitidis* (meningococcus) bacteria is the only organism causing an epidemic form of meningitis (and therefore only patients infected with meningococcus need be isolated in a hospital setting). Inappropriate isolation of patients with other forms of bacterial meningitis does put a stress not only on hospital personnel, but also on parents and friends of the patient who are subjected to unnecessary anxiety.

A pediatrician or internist who has had experience in handling cases of meningitis can usually make a definitive diagnosis of the offending bacteria by staining the spinal fluid at the time of lumbar puncture. The spinal fluid is then plated on culture media and incubated so that the bacteria may grow and so that positive identification can be made from the growing colonies. These colonies of bacteria are subjected to various antimicrobial agents so that relative sensitivities of these bacteria to various antibiotics can be ascertained.

The physician, however, does not wait for these antibiotic sensitivities. Antibiotics are started intravenously as soon as the spinal fluid has been

obtained in the lumbar puncture. Based upon the staining appearance of the bacterium at the time of spinal tap, treatment is begun promptly with high doses of penicillin, ampicillin, chloramphenicol, or other antibiotics, based upon the clinical setting and the age of the patient.

The discovery of antibiotics has altered bacterial meningitis from a fatal disease to one from which most patients recover. The mortality rate for bacterial meningitis varies with the offending organism. Mortality for *H. influenzae* meningitis is lower than five per cent, and for meningitis from the meningococcus it is about ten per cent. The highest mortality is with pneumococcal meningitis where the mortality rate is about twenty per cent, but it must be remembered that included in patients with pneumococcal meningitis are those with advanced age, serious infections elsewhere, and significant underlying disease such as diabetes, leukemia, or alcoholism. An otherwise healthy patient with pneumococcal meningitis does not risk a twenty per cent mortality.



One further point about the treatment of bacterial meningitis—a point reflecting personal bias. Bacterial infections of the meninges occur infrequently enough that they should always be treated by or have care supervised by a specialist, either a pediatrician or an internist. Parents, relatives, and friends can and should be able to suspect the diagnosis of meningitis. Family practitioners should be able to diagnose meningitis; our family practitioners at Stephens Memorial Hospital routinely do so, quite admirably. Examination of the spinal fluid and manipulation of the antibiotic treatment for meningitis are both quite difficult diagnostic and therapeutic maneuvers which cannot be done in a cookbook fashion. Here, the consulting pediatrician or internist plays a vital role in treating the disease.

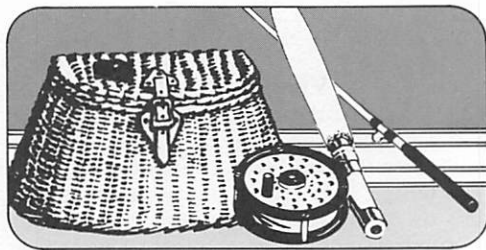
Viral Meningitis

Viral meningitis is a benign disease with the same clinical symptoms of headache, fever, and neck stiffness which occur with bacterial meningitis. A number of viruses cause viral or aseptic meningitis, but the Coxsackie and ECHO viruses are responsible for about one-half of all cases. These two viruses, together with a number of other viruses which can cause meningitis, are responsible for many of the attendant symptoms which can occur with viral meningitis: generalized malaise, sore throat, nausea and vomiting, abdominal pain, cough, chest pain—symptoms of any viral upper respiratory infection or flu-like illness. When the viruses responsible for the flu-like illness or upper respiratory infection infect the meninges, viral meningitis is the result. In addition to headache, fever, and neck stiffness, these viruses may cause a generalized rash, thereby confusing the infection with that from meningococcal meningitis, which also has a rash. Lumbar puncture is a vital part of the diagnostic work-up of the patient with viral meningitis, although in this case it will not tell us the particular virus involved. Nevertheless, changes found in the spinal fluid on lumbar puncture will often suggest to the doctor a viral cause for the meningitis. Patients with viral meningitis fully recover within five to fourteen days of the onset of symptoms and do so without any specific treatment for the infection.

Measles, chicken pox, Rubella, and mumps are all common childhood infections caused by viruses. The viruses involved may all infect the meninges. Should signs and symptoms of meningitis develop in a child with any of these viral illnesses, prompt medical attention is mandatory.

Often it is difficult to distinguish between a viral and bacterial etiology (cause) for meningitis. It should be obvious that a person showing evidence of meningitis should never be assumed to have a viral or benign variety until this has been proven by appropriate testing by a physician.

In summary, meningitis is an infection of the protective coverings of the brain and of the spinal fluid. Its cardinal symptoms are headache, fever, and stiff neck. Once uniformly fatal, it is now an eminently treatable disease.



At The Cottage

by Carol Gestwicki

In The Beginning

Long ago we used to rent a cottage. On the appointed day, we drove up, carried in suitcases and boxes, unpacked, made up beds, put food away, and went out to sit in the sun, all within the space of a bare hour or two.

Now we have our own cottage. The process of opening up becomes rather more complicated, and we're lucky if we see the sun for days.

The first step comes in trying to remember just what it was from last year that we wanted to get ready for opening this year.

"Something broke when we were closing and we either had to bring a new one or something—can you think what it was?"

"We either needed more blankets or more towels—does anyone remember which?"

Astonishing how faint are these

thoughts from ten months before, when a whole winter life and home have come between. And we never remember.

"Oh, no!" as we unpack the towels from winter storage, "it was more towels we needed, not blankets. There's practically none left in one piece."

"Hasn't anybody seen the rope to tie the boat? Oh, that's what it was that fell apart last year—remember now? The kids used it when they were trying to build a rope ladder."

The next event where memory fails is during the stop at the store before we arrive at the cottage.

"Just the basics now, enough to get us through for a few days. I'm sure we need sugar and flour, tea bags maybe. No, I don't think we need toilet tissue—that's there from last year."

When we finally get to open the green plastic trash bags in which the leftovers from last year are stored, we

discover we now have at least three summers' worth of tea bags and no toilet tissue at all.

But all these attempts to remember are purely preliminary. The real essence of opening starts the minute we drive up, as we begin to examine the cottage critically for wear and tear.

"Would you look at that—the coat of stain I put on the steps last summer is gone, completely gone," I groan. My husband shakes his head over the beach. "Our work's cut out for us here. The ice moved all the sand out with it." Sobering discoveries.

Then comes the dramatic moment of unlocking the door. Here at last! There is, however, a quick sense of deflation, produced partly by stumbling over the canoe that sprawls across the whole living room floor.

Actually, the first impression of the interior of a cottage that has been closed for many months is mighty dreary—enough to make you wonder if you want to stay. The odor reminds us that bathing suits still wet from the last swim have been moldering all winter, while the moth balls have been pungently melting. The floor is completely littered with bodies of dead moths, and cobwebs brush us lightly with every step we take. From the rafters overhead, blankets and couch covers sway wearily. The cottage is dark, with windows tightly covered and the power turned off. Most of our summer possessions are in lumpy green plastic trash bags scattered on chairs and tables. Mighty dreary, indeed.

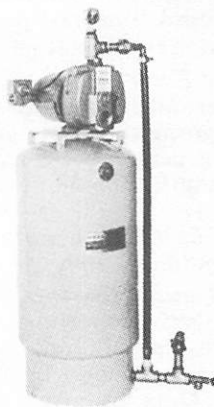
There is nothing for it but to plunge in, however tired we are from the long drive, or there will be no supper cooked or beds made, never mind the aesthetics. But grim as this may sound, once the process has begun, our spirits lift.

There are, for one thing, the traditional discoveries. These are not all positive discoveries, but the fact that they occur summer after summer makes their appearance oddly reassuring that we have, in fact, returned home. Despite the fact that our mouse traps were cunningly and attractively arranged, none was snapped, and the mice clearly had a gourmet field day nibbling on this and that. The gas bottle that was left over half full last summer has mysteriously emptied itself, so the back-up hot plate is pulled out, and hot water will be merely a dream until we can call the gas company on Monday. (It goes

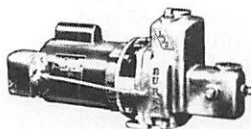


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without saying that opening always takes place on a weekend when everything is closed.)

The kids are busy making happier finds.

"I left three dollars in my bank last summer. Boy, now I've got lots of summer spending money."

"Remember that car I kept looking for at home? It was here, all the time."

The lure of toys on shelves unseen for ten months is strong and we have to keep reminding them of their tasks.

The task for which we all hold our breath and cross our fingers is the reconnection of the pump and water system. Even after many summers, the pump still holds mystery for us. Having done nothing more complicated than turn on a faucet for water all winter, it seems an Herculean effort to apply appropriate wrenches to appropriate nuts and connections and then get the whole thing to "hold its prime" and "get up to pressure" (and all the other cottage jargon we now begin to throw around) and all done in a crouched position under the cottage. The first trickle of strangely colored water from the kitchen tap is greeted with cheers.

By late in the afternoon, we have

achieved a semblance of order. The floor is comparatively clean and uncluttered, the canoe is by the beach where it belongs, the blankets are back on the beds, and it is going to be possible to cook supper and wash up. Nothing fancy, mind you—all the niceties will appear slowly in the next few days.

The kids have reached their work limit and are taking the first swim. The shriek as they hit the cold water, and shriek again as the first water fight of the summer begins. We have dragged the porch chairs out and dusted them off, and sit rocking as the sun slants sideways on the lake. We are exhausted and dirty, but the realization is starting to sink in that we are here, this magical place is really ours, we belong here. And for now that is enough to make us forget the recent dreariness of a cottage waiting to be opened, and the later sadness of a cottage being—reluctantly—closed. Another summer has begun.

Mrs. Gestwicki summers in North Waterford and winters in Charlotte, North Carolina. This column will be a regular summer feature of Bitter-Sweet.

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Readers' Room:

OUR SUMMER ON A MAINE FARM

In the 1930's and 40's when my husband Harold was teaching in Torrington, Connecticut, we spent our summers on the Bethel farm of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Elliot Rich. Our sons, Stuart, James, and Donald, thought the farm was the nicest place on earth and their grandparents the dearest people.

We would start our annual journey of 300+ miles a day or two after school closed, stopping for the first time in Charlemont, Massachusetts with my parents. From there we would pass into Vermont and travel along the Connecticut River Valley into New Hampshire. When we reached the White Mountains surrounding Gorham, we always felt as though we were almost in Bethel and the boys' excitement grew by the minute.

Finally we were in town, then travelling along Paradise Road and Paradise Hill where the farmhouse stood, and where Mother and Father Rich were eagerly awaiting us in the yard. We were all happy to be reunited. We stood in the front yard, gazing at the familiar beautiful hills and valleys, Mt. Abram in the distance. The boys and their father and his father would take a short walk around the grounds before coming in to a bountiful supper and an early retiring.

Days on the farm quickly took on a certain regularity. The boys were up bright and early. Customarily, Jamie went first to the barn to clean out the tie-up while his grandfather milked the cow, coming in to breakfast looking like he needed a little cleaning up, himself! After breakfast, the boys would head for the woods, their favorite place on the farm. They spent many hours there, making trails and bough shelters and climbing trees.

About the middle of June the hay-making began. Father Rich brought out the mowing machine and hitched a

pair of horses to it, then cut the hay and raked it into long rows with the hay rake. The next day it was piled into haystacks by the boys, who were happy to help in this operation. Jamie could be seen using his small pitchfork, made for him by his grandfather. The grass would be loaded into the hay wagon and drawn by the horses back into the barn with the boys riding on top. Later the hay was pitched into the hay mows, and the fun really began for the boys. They never seemed to tire of jumping from a high mow into a lower one.

After a long hot day in the hayfields, my husband Hal and I would take the boys to Songo Pond for a swim. I sat on the bank, watching them cavort in the water until it was time to call them out; then they came ashore slowly, not wanting to dress to go home.

Mother Rich spent all day every Saturday baking beans and making brown bread and rolls. This meant keeping a fire in the kitchen stove, no matter how hot and uncomfortable the day was, but she liked to keep her family well fed and was glad to see the boys gain weight. She also found

time to fry doughnuts and bake pies, and she always kept a pitcher of milk on the table for each meal. The farm was *not* a good place for people who wanted to lose weight!

Father Rich—an expert fisherman—and Hal would sometimes go to Locke Mills to catch pickerel. After spending the day there, they would come home with their fish-basket full—how delicious they tasted fried in salt pork fat! Stuart liked to go with his grandfather to fish for trout in Dwight Brook. These we prepared by baking them in cream. Wonderful!

It was late in June when we started to have vegetables from the garden, radishes and lettuce first, followed by turnip and beet greens. Around the 4th of July we always enjoyed a fine traditional treat when new peas and small potatoes were boiled together, then drowned in butter and cream. I think this was a Maine custom, and a very happy one.

At about this time the berry season began and I could roam the fields looking for wild strawberries. I really enjoyed picking them; we all enjoyed the strawberry pies and shortcakes Mother Rich made. I was even glad to take over the chore of hulling the



Rich Farmhouse, Bethel, 1938

berries, when fresh berries with sugar and cream was my reward!

There were only a few raspberries around to pick, but blueberries grew in great abundance, and I enjoyed filling my pail with them. We never grew tired of the muffins, cakes, and pies that Hal's mother made, and I liked canning the berries that weren't needed for the table.

We had a large patch of cultivated blackberries, and it kept us busy for most of the month of August, picking them. They were eaten fresh or baked in pies, and some were sold by Father Rich.

Once Jamie and Donnie offered to help their grandfather pick blackberries, and at first they did pretty well; putting as many berries in their pails as in their stomachs. Then, as the novelty wore off, they started throwing berries at each other. Father Rich had infinite patience, and never scolded his grandsons, but I said a few cross words when I saw their berry-stained blouses, faces and hands. So that was the end of their "helping."

Stuart was old enough to really help around the farm. He willingly worked at the woodpile and in the garden. Hal labored in the woods with his father as they cut the fuel supply for the coming cold winter. He worked for hours cultivating the potato patch and corn fields.

Hal especially enjoyed taking the boys on hiking and camping trips in the White Mountains where they all had such a wonderful time. He was determined to make a mountain-climber out of me, and I'll say that he succeeded quite well. Occasionally he would go on a trip by himself for a few

days of carefree pleasure climbing and enjoying the beauties of nature. He knew where to find the rare Alpine flowers, and picked a few to take home so we all could enjoy them.

On Sundays Hal took his mother and me to the Congregational Church where Rev. Curtis preached and I sang in the choir. Sometimes we all went to see his mother's sisters—Fannie in Gorham or Bertha in Erroll, New Hampshire. These trips were pure pleasure for Mother Rich, who only saw her nearer sister Lulu every day.

But the first of September always came too soon. We had to start our preparations for the return to Connecticut. With bag and baggage in the car, five people, and the large supply of fresh vegetables, potatoes, and early apples Hal's father added, we made quite a load!

Within a few days of leaving the farm, the boys were back in their Torrington classes, and Hal was teaching again in the high school. He retired in 1951 and we went to the farm to live there together until his death in 1974.

Our sons are scattered now. Jim's in Massachusetts, Don's in Vermont, and Stuart's in Eugene, Oregon, where he and his wife Joan have kindly shared their home with me since 1976.

Oregon is beautiful and I have made several new friends here. I keep in good health, at 85, by taking daily walks, and I'm thankful at my good fortune in being with Stuart and his wife in their lovely home. But I miss my native New England!

*Evelyn Frary Rich
Eugene, Oregon*

THE TIE THAT BINDS

To me, Maine means belonging. And today I belong to Maine as surely as I belonged as a child. My fragile claim to roots in Maine lies chiefly through my grandparents. My grandfather Wardwell, on my father's side, was born in Castine. My grandmother Sanderson (née Wilder), my mother's mother, was born in Raymond; but most important of all, my step-grandfather (Raymond Sanderson) was born in South Waterford and became the owner of a camp on the Five Kezar Lakes in North Waterford before my

appearance on the human scene.

As brief as my childhood visits to this camp in Maine were, I always felt as though I were coming home. I belonged to camp, to the dear lake bordering it, and to the dirt road leading to it. I belonged to the village and to its Clover Leaf Store with the worn doorsill which seems to have ceased responding to the scores of feet passing over it daily. I belonged to Bubba's farm and the calves tied in the barn, to the black sink in the kitchen and to the round oak table sitting on the dark linoleum in the dining room.

Grampie Sanderson with his eleven brothers and sisters proved to be my strongest link to belonging because somehow or other through him I was related to nearly everyone in the small village of North Waterford. And the ability to claim and prove this relationship gave me as an outsider a teeny edge on belonging.

Bubba, dearly loved by four generations of youngsters today, being Mother's step-aunt's father became my step-great-uncle. Thus his six other children besides Auntie Jo were my great aunts and uncles and their children my cousins once or twice removed. As vague as these relationships were (because Grampie was only my step-grandfather in the first place!) they became the most important ones in my life as soon as I recognized that I might be related to someone besides my father, mother, and sister. Mother tolerated my expanded sense of family while making it plain that she needed no one other than my dad, my sister, and me.

Throughout the year, my ardor for Maine burned strongly, kindled by tales told and retold; by my father's home movies taken during our stay in Maine; and by our keen anticipation of next summer's vacation.

Dad seemed to belong to Maine, too. It must be through him and through my ancestors that I feel a kinship with Maine folk. Their culture could easily be my culture; their ways, my ways. I relate to our little village through her people. And although the cherished relationships of my childhood have long since faded, the resulting sense of belonging so strongly established in my childish imagination remains today a firm bond between Maine and me.

Mrs. Collins returns each summer



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from Hampden, Connecticut to her home in North Waterford.

MY GARDEN

It was such a beautiful spring day. The snow was all gone in the fields except for patches where the pines were thickest going down toward the spring. Children were all running barefoot through the snow, squealing in delight. You'd think they had got enough of snow through the winter.

Soon it would be time to plow my garden, so I sat on a flat rock on the stone wall by the well, in quiet meditation. I thought I'd have my garden right where the hen house used to be;

the ground should be good and rich so I wouldn't need to buy much dressing.

I thought, "I'm getting a little too old to spade it, maybe I could borrow a horse and plow and have a good-sized garden with more potatoes than before." I've always had good luck with potatoes (when I cut them I leave two eyes on each piece; I plant them by hand). Then come fall I could exchange the potatoes for groceries.

I slapped my hands on my knees and got up, happy as I looked where my garden was going to be—a beautiful potato patch. Now whose horse should I borrow?

"Sumner has a good horse," I said to myself, "but Sumner is way older than I am. Don't think he has a plow; if he has it's a rusty old thing as old as he is. Frank's horse Danny is so scrawny he might fall down on me. Elmer has oxen—that's out."

"Now I've got it! Why didn't I think of him in the first place? John has a good horse and he always has a good corn field. I'll go right now and ask John for his horse, Harry, and a plow."

John's wife was home and she tried to explain to me (she spoke very little English) that John had gone to Norway with Harry and wouldn't be home until late in the day. I told her I wanted to plow my garden. She understood I wanted to plow that very same



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day and took me to the barn to show me their new horse, Billy. I could borrow him—what a beautiful creature, young and powerful. Little did I know what I was up against, forgetting John tamed his own horses wild from the west.

I hitched Billy to the plow that was tilted to the side, all ready to go to my garden. I was leading Billy and we were getting along just fine, going down the road, when all of a sudden "all hell broke loose." I don't know if a horsefly bit him or if he was feeling yesterday's oats.

He went up in the air with all fours. I couldn't let go of the horse, he lunged and kicked all four points of the compass at once. I hung on. I was no longer on the ground, but up and down like a pump handle, keeping time to his leaps. I knew how the ground would feel if I let go, and what about the plow? It came flying and bouncing just as fast as we were going.

Luck was with me. How it happened I don't know to this day. I had to let go of the horse and somehow fell clear of the plow. The horse and plow kept going.

Later in the day I found Billy; he was standing very quietly by Frank's house. Frank's wife had telephone wire strung up from tree to tree as a clothesline. Billy had run into it, chest-high. And the plow? It was no earthly good.

I led Billy back to John's barn and told John's wife the best way I could that I'd buy John a new plow.

I'm home again now, sitting on the flat rock by the stone wall by the well, looking at my garden, thinking of my beautiful potato patch. I'll start spading it . . . tomorrow.

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